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Historical Discourse

BY

REV. E O. JAMESON,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST,

MEDWAY, MASS.

1876.

1714. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." 1876.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

PREACHED ON THE

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

First Church of Christ,

MEDWAY, MASS.

FIRST SABBATH IN OCTOBER,

1876.

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BY REV. E. O. JAMESON, PASTOR.

PUBLISHED BY THE CHURCH.

BOSTON:
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RESOLVES,

Unanimously adopted by the First Church of Christ, in Medway, at their Monthly Meeting on Saturday, Nov. 4, 1876.

Resolved, That we heartily appreciate the patient research and labor involved in the preparation of the very able and interesting Historical Discourse delivered by our Pastor on the occasion of our late Anniversary; and moved thereto by our own desire to preserve the historical incidents relating to our Church and Society, thus laboriously gathered, as well, as by a very generally expressed wish in the community about us, we most respectfully ask of him that the same may be published, together with the Historical Sketch of the Sabbath School presented by him on the same occasion.

Resolved, That a Committee of three be chosen to co-operate with our Pastor in reference to the publication and distribution of his discourse.

Resolved, That this Committee consist of the Deacons of the Church, viz., Dea. Elbridge Clark, Dea. William Daniels, and Dea. Horatio Jones.

A true copy.

Attest. WILLIAM DANIELS, *Clerk.*

Letter of the Pastor.

TO THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, IN MEDWAY.

Dear Brethren and Friends,—Your Clerk has placed in my hands a copy of the resolutions adopted at the last Church Meeting.

These resolutions have reference to the publication of the Historical Discourse preached on the occasion of the late Anniversary of the Church, together with the Historical Sketch of the Sabbath School read on the same day.

You will please accept my thanks for this kind expression of interest and appreciation; and in consideration of the general wish expressed; and in further consideration that the incidents and facts, thus gathered, may remain of some local account in years to come, I am persuaded to yield to your request, and do hereby consent to have these papers published.

Your affectionate Pastor,

E. O. JAMESON.

NOVEMBER 15, 1876.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. — Ps. 48 : 12-13.

In all ages and countries it has been the common impulse of mankind to leave some memorial. This universal desire is evidenced by builded monument and pyramid, by hieroglyphic and hierogram, by the story and song of tradition, by painting and sculpture, by coins and written annals. And this human passion to be remembered by leaving some memorial to future generations of what has been, of transpired events, of human deeds and achievements, appears to have inscribed upon it the signature of God's approval and encouragement; for He expressly commanded ancient Israel to build the heap of stones, to raise the memorial pillar, to erect the altar of witness, to set up the stone of Ebenezer, to record and rehearse in story and psalm the national history. God seems to tell us that in leaving such monuments and records a kindly service is rendered succeeding generations, for we find, in that the Bible is so largely historical, that God himself values highly such means of human instruction.

Corresponding to this universal and divinely approved desire for remembrance, we find an almost equally universal fondness for the memorials of the past. There is a strong instinctive impulse to find out what has transpired; and mankind of to-day are as eager to decipher the ancient hieroglyphic, to spell out the time-worn and illegible records as the old generations ever could have been to inscribe them.

The interest in history is very general. Hardly anything has greater fascination for the human mind than historical research; old ruins are excavated, buried cities exhumed, the bowels of the earth ransacked, quaint symbols and old records studied, by this human desire to learn what has been.

This impresses us, only the more, with the sacred obligation to leave on record whatever may prove of interest or value to those who shall live after us.

We should recognize not only these corresponding impulses of human nature, — the one to tell its history, the other, to hear it told, but, it seems to me, we should recognize also an obligation, a sacred duty we owe to those who shall succeed us, to gather up with care and patience the scattered materials and loose fragments of history, which lie unknown or hid away in the attics of ancient dwellings, and liable to be lost, in some box or basket of waste papers; to pick up, bind together, and place on file in some secure form, all those items and facts of earlier times which have floated down the years and lie loosely about, only too easily burned up and lost. To secure these for preservation and hand them over to posterity seems a service not to be neglected.

While, at all times, we should seek to serve the Future, by handing over to her whatever may be of historic interest and value, yet perhaps at certain epochs it becomes the special duty, as it should be the privilege, of those who happen to be then living and filling certain relations, to undertake a somewhat unusual service; to make, even, a somewhat laborious research, and by an outlay of time and expense to compile and place in some substantial form the incidents and annals of the past, that thus the national, local, or church history may be handed over to our successors, and its preservation secured.

Moses lived in such a day, and fulfilled, by Divine help, such a service; so also Ezra and other inspired men; and such an epoch had come, and such a service was demanded of the inhabitants of Jerusalem whom the Text addresses. God calls

upon the citizens of Zion, in the day of her truest grandeur and her highest prosperity, to survey her architectural magnificence, her proud defences, her palatial wealth, to consider her wonderous local history, and to do this, that they might pass down to the coming generations the traditions of her glory the story of her municipal strength and opulence. God says to the citizens of that ancient town, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces: that ye may tell it to the generations following." Are not such words the voice of God to us, citizens of America, in this Centennial epoch of our national history? Is not this the time, which calls for that somewhat unusual service, that somewhat laborious research, and liberal expenditure to discover, to compile, and to transmit for preservation whatever there may be of historical fact and incident concerning the nation, the state, the town, and the parish? So that, whatever is worthy of record, we may tell to the generation following. To such a service the inspired Text, the recent enactment of our American Congress, the close of a century of unprecedented national development, and, I may add, the wonderful Providence and Grace of God to the Church, call us.

It happens to me, at such time, to be standing in this honored pulpit as the Pastor of this ancient Church of Christ. Thus standing in this sacred place, and in such relations of sacred trust, I am persuaded, if not as by an obligation, yet, as by a personal privilege and as a service that might not be wholly without interest and value to you, to yield myself somewhat to the call made, and give the hour of discourse this morning to

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN MEDWAY.

In the preparation of this historical sketch I have glanced with curious eye and with no ordinary pleasure, along the pages of the old Record Books of Church and Parish. I have

seized with an eager hand the scattered papers, yellow with age, lying about in the attics of ancient homes. I have read with interest the almost illegible Diaries of the old inhabitants. I have made some of the happiest discoveries of facts of church history, inscribed on the fly-leaves and margins of old Psalm-books and Almanacs; and, with diligent search, have picked up here and there many quaint and curious things of the olden times, only a few of which can be brought within the reasonable limits of a discourse. The history of this ancient Church covers a period of one hundred and sixty-two years, reaching back to a date within a few months of the incorporation of the town. In fact, it was that this Church of Christ might be organized, that the Town of Medway was conceived and given an existence. It was to make ready for this Church, to build its meeting-house, and to provide for its minister, that the Great General Court was petitioned, and the Act of Incorporation granted, by which the town of Medway was established. Indeed, that the inhabitants might have among themselves a meeting-house, a "learned Orthodox minister," and Christian institutions, was the principal object in those days for which any locality sought and were granted town privileges. Thus Medway was the cradle prepared in which to place and rock the infant Church, and for many years the officers of the town, selectmen and various committees, were the nursing fathers and mothers, the guardians, to care for and nourish the infancy and childhood of this Church of Christ.

Preliminary to the account to be given, it will be of interest, perhaps, to run over hastily what is known of this locality, prior to the formation of this Church. Hence let us trace briefly, —

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THIS REGION.

The Indian name of these parts, next adjacent the vast, unknown, and unbroken wilderness toward the setting sun,

across the river Charles from Dedham, was Boggastow. When the West part of Dedham, or "Middle-Field," so called, was granted by the General Court, by an Act of Incorporation, Jan. 1, 1650, these lands, known as Boggastow, were embraced within the limits of the new township under the name of Meadfield, now called Medfield. In the order of incorporation Medfield was the forty-third town of Massachusetts.

It was incorporated while John Endicott was Governor of the Colony, about a year after Charles the First was beheaded, and during the ascendancy of Cromwell in England. Nine years after, in 1659, settlements having pushed further to the westward, there was added to Medfield a new territory of eight square miles, a region called by the Indians "Mucksquirt," subsequently called the "New Grant," and now known as West Medway.

The early settlers of Medfield, West of the Charles, were for some years few and scattered; and in the days of Indian hostilities, under King Philip, they were exceedingly exposed to assaults and depredations of the savages.

After the burning of Medfield village, Feb. 21, 1676, Monday morning, the Indians, some five hundred in number, retired across the river to this part of the town, burning the bridge after them, and assembled on the top of one of the nearest hills, in full view of the ruins they had occasioned. There they held a savage feast, and King Philip himself was seen on a black horse galloping and prancing about, in high glee over the havoc he had made. The people of this part of Medfield had provided themselves with a stone building near Boggastow Pond, into which they all retired for safety. The Indians lingered about in these regions, attempting to invade the garrison at different times, and finally made a fierce assault upon the "Stone-house" on the 6th of May, 1676, but "met with a notorious repulse."

At the time of this final assault, it appears, that all the people of the settlement were safely within the Stone-house except

one mother with her young babe, who, being too weak to walk the distance or too late in seeking the refuge, was left, poor woman! separated by the woods and a distance of a mile and more from all the other inhabitants, in an unprotected dwelling, with no mortal to speak to, with no lighted candle. Alone in the darkness, the yell of the savages in her ears, she sat all night long holding her child in her arms, on the cellar-stairs of a house that anciently stood near that of our venerable neighbor, Mr. Silas Richardson.

For weeks after, the women and children kept close within the stone building, while the men, with musket and hoe in hand, went forth, when the sun was an hour high, to their lands, and returned an hour before sunset. The following July, however, a desperate battle was fought in the woods near by, and the Indians were defeated, put to flight, and pursued as far as Taunton, by a force of thirty men with ninety Christian Indians, under the command of the heroic Capt. Joseph Morse. In this pursuit no less than fifty Indians were taken captive, among whom was Pomham, the great Sachem of the Narragansetts. It was very soon after, that King Philip himself was slain, and the savages abandoned this part of the country and never after disturbed the settlers in these parts.

History tells us that the people who first occupied these lands "were men and women of ardent piety."

Their first minister, while they belonged to Medfield, was Rev. John Wilson, Jr., the eldest son of "Rev. John Wilson, the first minister of Charlestown, afterwards the first minister of the First Church in the ancient town of Boston." John Wilson, Jr., was a graduate of the first class of Harvard University in 1642. He was settled in Medfield in 1651, and continued their minister for forty years, until his death He died Aug. 23, 1691, at the age of seventy years. "The Lord's day preceding his translation," (reads the record) "he preached both forenoon and afternoon fervently and powerfully. The Lord's day he expired, the greater part of his

Church were present to behold and lament his removal from them."

After the lapse of nearly six years from the decease of their first minister, and after hearing thirty-two different candidates, (which seems about the only modern thing to be told of those olden times,) they ordained as the second pastor of Medfield, April 21, 1697, a young man not yet twenty-one years of age, whose name was Joseph Baxter, a native of Braintree, and a graduate of Harvard University in the Class of 1693. Rev. Mr. Baxter was pastor for nearly forty-eight years, until his death, which took place May 2, 1745, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. Of him the historian of the church says, "He was much respected and generously supported."

It was in the seventeenth year of the ministry of this second pastor of Medfield, Rev. Joseph Baxter, in the year 1713, that the inhabitants of old Boggastow and the New Grant, having become somewhat numerous and prosperous, and it being a long distance to the meeting-house at Medfield Plain, and bitterly cold crossing the wide intervening meadow lands in Winter, these people, situated thus remotely from their place of public worship, began to think of having a meeting-house and a minister among themselves. For more than sixty years they had faithfully attended the meetings in the old Church beyond the river at the centre of the town; and they dearly loved the "old meeting-house," they loved the people of that part of Medfield, and they loved their good minister; but the distance was great, and in cold weather very tedious "the way to Zion's hill." Therefore they determined to establish the Gospel among themselves. Inspired by this idea of having a meeting-house, a minister, public worship, and a Church, they went about obtaining an Act of Incorporation as a town. Accordingly, they petitioned the Governor and General Court, and their petition was granted in the twelfth year of the reign of Queen Anne, sometimes called "the Good Queen," the Act of Incorporation being dated Oct. 25, 1713, and reading as follows: —

ANNO REGNI ANNÆ REGINÆ DUODECIM.

An Act for dividing of the Township of Medfield and erecting a new Town there by the name of Medway.

Whereas the lands of the Township of Medfield within the County of Suffolk lye situate on Charles River, to wit on both sides of the said River being divided by the same: and the Town plat and principal settlement, as also the Meeting-house for the Public Worship of God, being seated on the East side for the accommodation of the first and Ancient Inhabitants, who are now much increased, many issued forth and settled on the West side of the River to a competent number for a distinct Town of themselves, and labor under many hardships and Difficulties by reason of separation by the River to enjoy equal benefit and town privileges with others their fellow Townsmen and neighbors, and have therefore made application to the Town as also addressed this Court to be made a distinct Town. Committees appointed by this Court having been upon the Ground, viewed the same and Reported in their favor for proper bounds to be set them.

Be it Enacted by his Excellency the Governour, Council and Representatives in General Court assembled and by the Authority of the same:

That all those Lands lying on the West Side of Charles River, now part of the Township of Medfield, be Erected and made into a Distinct and Separate Town by the name of Medway, the River to be the Bounds betwixt the Two Towns. And that the Inhabitants of Medway have, use and exercise and enjoy all such power and privileges which other Towns have, and so by Law use, exercise & enjoy. So that they procure and Settle a Learned, Orthodox Minister of good Conversation among 'em and make provision for an Hon^{able} support & maintainance for him. And that in order thereto, they be Discharged from further payment to the Ministry in Medfield from and after the last day of February next.

Provided also. — That all Province and Town Taxes that are already Levied, or Granted, be collected and paid, and all Town Rights and Common undivided Lands remain to be divided among the Interested as if no Separation had been made.

And Mr. George Fairbanks, a principal Inhabitant of the said Town of Medway, is hereby Directed and Impowered to notify and Summon the Inhabitants duly Qualified for Voters to Assemble and meet together for the Choosing of Town Officers to stand untill the next Annual Election according to Law.

A true Copy.
Examined.

I. ADDINGTON, *Sec'ry.*

And thus were the old Indian lands of "Boggastow" and "Mucksquirt" constituted the town of Medway, in order of incorporation the sixty-ninth town in the Commonwealth; and the inhabitants were to "use and exercise and enjoy all such powers and privileges, which other towns have and so by *Law*, use exercise and enjoy, so that they procure and Settle a Learned Orthodox Minister of good Conversation among them and make provision for an honorable support and maintainance for him."

This separation, your ancestors were careful to place on record, "was not in consequence of any dislike to their minister or the Church and Society to which they belonged, or any difference in religious sentiments, but that they and their posterity might more conveniently enjoy gospel privileges." Tradition says, that the name Medway was suggested by the locality itself, it being situated Meadway, *i. e.*, between or by way of the meadows.

FORMATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The people of the new town of Medway at once set about the exercise of their incorporated rights and privileges.

Accordingly, under date of

"Medway november y^e^ 23. $17\frac{1}{13}$" the first Town Meeting was held. And after choice of Town Officers, "to stand to next Annual Election which will be March 14^th^ 1714," viz. Town Clerk, Constable and five Select-Men, it was

"Voted, That John Rockett and Jonathan Adams, Sen^r^, Serg^t^ Samuel Partridge, and Serg^t^ Jonathan Adams and Edward Clark to be a Committee to take care to procure the Meeting-house built."

The second vote was,

"To procure accommodations for the setting the Meeting-house upon the place commonly called Bare Hills and procure some convenient accommodations for the Ministry thereabouts." Two weeks later the Town voted, To "put out y^e^ Meeting-house by y^e^ job to some workman, and that men that are to be employed in the work to be hired in this Town."

The plan being adopted, the articles of agreement, made between John Richardson and the Committee for building the Meeting-house, were signed June 7, 1714.

Thus the building of the Meeting-house was given in charge of faithful John Richardson, with instructions to employ only citizens of the town, doubtless so that every workman should have an interest in his work as well as his pay. A wisdom worthy to be copied!

When now the work was well under way, and the first Meeting-house had been raised over on yonder hill, (called Bare, not because the rendezvous of bears, but because barren, as we see to this day,) a meeting of the town was called, of which we have this record:

"1714 September the 22. Assembled the Enhabitants of Medway At the house of peter Adamses. John Rocket was chose moderator. Voted, that the Town will provide a minister for themselves for the time to come. Voted, Capt. gorge fairbancks and John partridg and peter Adams and Ensin John bullard and ser. Timothy Clarke is chosen a comitty to provide a minister for the Town untill the aniwall metting in march next following, and it is voted that y^e^ town are to meet at the house of peter Adamses to atend the publick worship of God on the sabbath days and he haws given his consent to the same."

Thus a temporary place of worship is provided, and a committee of five prominent citizens are charged with the high responsibility of securing a minister. But in those days there were no telegraph, railroad, post-office, no regular mails, hardly a highway; and last but not least, no Ministers' Bureau and no Mr. Sargent to help a parish to a good minister upon an hour's notice. There was no way open but for two or more of this committee to journey to Cambridge or Boston and arrange for a minister as soon as might be. They fulfilled their mission, and returned with the word, that, "on the first sabbath in October (*i. e.*, Oct. 7, 1714) a minister will preach in Medway."

And, doubtless, to the coming of that first Sabbath of October, one hundred and sixty-two years ago, the inhabitants of

the new town looked with even greater interest than any of us have looked forward to the coming of this day of its anniversary.

That was a long time ago. Things here have changed. Then there were dense forests, with only here and there a narrow clearing; and rude dwellings, scattered about, were few in number. The people had never seen a church-spire or heard a church-bell. The low, flat-roofed, first Meeting-house was not yet completed. True, the building was going up: just over on Bare Hills the daily clatter of hammers gave assurance that good John Richardson had not forgotten his contract, that he and his neighbors were busy.

This was a frontier settlement then, the "out West" of that day; everything was new and primitive. But the same sky was overhead then, as now; the same God and Saviour was beyond the sky; and pious hearts gathered around family altars in the homes here then, as now.

The autumn foliage was brilliant and gorgeous, as it is to-day, on that desired Sabbath morning one hundred and sixty-two years ago.

That first Sabbath of October, 1714, to the scattered settlers of Medway, dawned as no other ever had, because they were to have, for the first time, public worship in the place. Hence they awoke that morning to a new experience.

The minister had arrived a day or two before. As the hour of public worship drew on, there was heard through the settlement the solemn tap of Peter Adams's old drum, which he had brought home from the Indian wars, and the people were seen gathering, on foot and on horseback, from all parts of the town, along the crooked paths, through woods and clearings, all going towards the house of Peter Adams. There were old and venerable men and women, mothers with their babies, boys and girls, Indians and colored people, all hurrying to one place. There was to be a meeting that day! And by the time of service, the large, low-ceiled rooms were packed with an eager and happy congregation.

The preacher, who was there, seated by the small table, with the family Bible open before him, (who had come from Boston, or Cambridge, or elsewhere, as a candidate,) was a man of some forty years, with a mild, intelligent face, wearing a solemn yet kind expression. His name was asked and whispered from one to another. "It is the Rev. Mr. Deming," said this lady to the one sitting next to her. All seemed eager and expectant; at length, as the preacher rose, every eye was riveted, every lip hushed, and every heart solemn. Stretching forth his hand, the minister said, "Let us pray!" That prayer, so solemn, so tender, so fervent! It seemed to speak in each heart, "*This is a man of God!*" Then they sang a metred psalm in some good old tune, in which there was devout worship, as there is not in much modern church music. Afterward came the sermon, for it had not then been voted, nor was it for a long time after, the practice to read "the Scriptures" in public service.

The Puritans held that the Bible was for the laity to read and interpret for themselves, and hence forbade its public reading in worship by the clergy. "It was a good sermon," the people said; and they said so, because all sermons were good to them, and because it went straight as an Indian's arrow to its mark, to the heart and conscience of the hearer.

There was probably an afternoon service that day, but no Sabbath School and no Sabbath Evening Prayer-meeting till the lapse of more than a hundred years.

Whether, then and there, on that first occasion of public worship, or not till some months after, this Church was formally organized is not known, and it is immaterial; for this Church of Christ was formed, in fact, on that day, by the assembling together of Christian believers, with the understanding that henceforth they were to worship statedly together in one place, and celebrate Christian ordinances: such is the essential simplicity and beauty of the New Testament, or Congregational, principle of constituting a Christian Church.

We love to think that this old Church of Christ in Medway was established, so exactly, after the manner of the primitive churches in the apostolic times! And we are happy to observe the first Sabbath of October, the day on which public worship was held in the town for the first time, as the Anniversary Day of the organization of this ancient Church.

We are happy also to find that the first Christian preacher on the ground, the one who preached the first sermon in the town of Medway, was the same, who afterward became her first settled minister.

As proof, that "the first Sabbath in October" is the day, and that Rev. Mr. Deming was the preacher on that day, I copy from the town records the following receipt of salary, signed by the hand of Rev. Mr. Deming himself, as follows: —

"Medway, April the 11th, 1715, at the house of Joseph Danielson. Then and there, Received the sum of 26 pounds of money of the Select-Men and Committee for preaching to the Town, which is in full discharge from the *seventh of October in the year* 1714 to the ninth day of April in the year 1715.

"I say received by me,

(Signed) DAVID DEMING."

The town met, Jan. 31, 1715, to call a minister for settlement. The record is "When the votes were given in and sorted, Rev. David Deming was chosen to settle amongst us to carry on the work of the ministry." But either because of engagements elsewhere, or for some other reason, Mr. Deming did not accept this call until the following September. His letter of acceptance was read in open town-meeting held Sept. 12, 1715, in the Meeting-house, which at that date was sufficiently completed for occupancy. The town voted an annual salary of sixty pounds; and at a subsequent meeting, Oct. 24, 1715, they voted, "That the ordination of Mr. Deming should take place on the third Wednesday in November next." And accordingly, on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 1715, Rev. David Deming was ordained and became the first pastor of the Church of Christ in Medway.

What churches were invited on the Council, what ministers took part in the services, who preached the Ordination Sermon, are matters to me unknown. That the first Meeting-house was dedicated on the day of Ordination is very probable.

1715 — FIRST MEETING-HOUSE. — 1749.

The first Meeting-house stood on the west side of what is now the Cemetery, a few rods north of the public tomb. It was thirty-four feet in length, twenty-eight feet in width, and sixteen feet between joints ; the roof was nearly flat, rising only four feet above the centre of beam. The walls were planked and clapboarded on the outside, and within "sealed up with good boards." There were galleries on three sides ; the pulpit was as high as possible, reached by a winding stair and shut up with a door. At first, there was but one pew made, probably for the Deacons ; the rest of the house was seated with pine benches. After three years had elapsed the town made an appropriation of twenty-five shillings, and instructed Mr. John Richardson "to build another pew at the North-East end of the Meeting-House next to the pulpit for the Minister's family to sit in." Subsequently other pews were built, on permission of the town, by the more wealthy and honorable families at their own expense. It was a current practice to have a committee chosen, men of good judgment, to seat the Meeting-house, *i. e.*, to assign the seats to persons according to their honorable standing, by reason of years and wealth.

In the winter of 1749, Jan. 18, this first Meeting-house was burned by some unknown person. Some surmised that it was set on fire by a certain negro, others, that a prominent desire among certain persons to have a new meeting-house inspired the burning of the old ; but whatever the unknown facts, we see that burning meeting-houses is not a "new thing under the sun," and that the world has not yet outgrown a very old iniquity. It seems that nothing was saved from the fire ex-

cept the glass ; this the Parish, which began to exist about that time, voted should be sold, and accordingly sales were made from time to time, as opportunity offered, and the avails were appropriated to pay Parish expenses, and for several years the income from this source was more than sufficient ; so that, finally, from the receipts for the glass from the old meeting-house, unexpended, ten shillings were appropriated to purchase a Parish Record Book, five shillings for a latch to put on the pulpit-door in the new meeting-house, and the balance, about four shillings, to compensate the parish clerk, Samuel Harding, Esq., for copying the minutes of the Parish into the new and large Record Book. And here we have [*showing it*] that old Record Book still in possession ; but whatever became of the five-shilling latch on the pulpit-door is among the things unknown.

With the ordination of Rev. David Deming, on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 1715, in the first Meeting-house in Medway, begins the series of pastorates of which the present is the ninth.

1715 — FIRST PASTORATE. — 1722.

Rev. Mr. Deming was a graduate of Harvard University, in the Class of 1700, the last class that graduated under the presidency of the Rev. Increase Mather. With whom the first Pastor of Medway studied Divinity is unknown. This was seventy years before Mr. Nathaniel Emmons became the minister of Franklin, and almost a century prior to the founding a School of the Prophets on Andover Hill. There are no Church Records of the period covered by Rev. Mr. Deming's ministry ; hence we know very little of his pastorate, or of this Church during those first years of its history. Of the list of members, prior to the second pastorate, only three names have come down to us ; these are John Partridge, Ebenezer Thompson, and Samuel Partridge, all of whom, subsequently, were chosen and officiated as Deacons of the Church.

Rev. Mr. Deming remained pastor only about seven years. Early in September, 1722, he called the Selectmen together and made this request, "That y^e^ Town would give him a total dismission from his ministerial office." Accordingly "assembled y^e^ inhabitants of this town on Monday y^e^ 24th of Sept. 1722," and "y^e^ Rev. Mr. Deming renewed his request by writing to y^e^ Town." A lengthy debate ensued. "A vote was tried to have the Town adjourn, but could get none. Then both Church and Town, as a Town, manifested their willingness by vote to give Mr. Deming his request, and dismiss him from his ministerial service amongst us." "The Select-men the same day by y^e^ desire of the Town acquainted Mr. Deming that they had answered his request." "He accepted and manifested his thanks to them for the same."

"October 16, 1722. The Church dismissed Mr. Deming from his pastoral office over them by advice of Council from the neighboring Churches."

Rev. Mr. Wright says, in his Century Sermon, of this first pastor, "His ministry was short, and according to tradition, unhappy for himself and for the Church and people of the town." And in his reflections he continues, "But that holy and merciful Being, who regards his Church and people as the apple of his eye, did not long permit this town to be destitute of the stated means of public religious instruction."

It appears that immediately on Mr. Deming's dismission, a committee was chosen to supply preaching by candidates for settlement; and we find that Feb. 19, 1724, the town voted a call very unanimously to Rev. Joseph Greene, of Boston, offering a salary of seventy-five pounds and a settlement of ninety pounds; but for some reason Mr. Greene declined the call. On the following June (*i. e.*, June 11, 1724) the town met again to cast their votes for a minister; and "when the vote came in, and was numbered, it fell unanimously upon Mr. Nathan Bucknam, both Church and Town." The salary offered was eighty pounds, and a hundred pounds were offered to en-

courage him, "y^e^ said Bucknam to settle with us." Subsequently the salary was made ninety pounds.

Mr. Bucknam did not return his answer of acceptance until Oct. 24 following, which Rev. Mr. Wright explains in this wise: "As he was a minor when he received the call, it is said he delayed his answer several months that he might arrive to the age of twenty-one years previous to his deciding upon a subject of such magnitude and importance."

In the town records we have the following entry: —

"*The Reverend Mr. Nathan Bucknam's Answer, Given October the* 25, 1724."

"To the Church and People of Medway:

"*Dearly beloved,* — Inasmuch, as it hath pleased the Lord of the harvest, the King and Head of the Church, whose sole prerogative it is to send forth such Labourers into his vineyard, as seemeth Him meet, in his over-ruling and all wise Providence, so to order it, that you were directed at first to invite me to dispense the glorious Gospel of his Grace to you in this place, and to render my ministerial labors amongst you so pleasing and acceptable, and so to unite your hearts and affections to me, that you have so unanimously given me an invitation to settle with you in the Great Work of Gospel Ministry, for which I acknowledge with thankfulness his mercy and grace as well as your kindness to me. And whereas, He has in his Sovereign Providence so far drawn forth my heart in love towards you and has so enlarged your hearts, as that you have made me such offers, respecting my settlement and support amongst you, as that, I hope by His blessing with it I may, at present comfortably subsist. These, therefore, are to let you know, that, relying upon y^e^ Divine Grace, blessing, directing and assistance, and depending upon your kindness and generosity, that you will not let me want hereafter: but as God shall give you ability and my circumstances may require, you will further assist me. Upon serious consideration of, and good advice about, a matter of so great concern, as it so nearly relates to the glory of God, to your and my comfort here and happiness hereafter, I do now, here, openly, heartily and cheerfully embrace and accept of your invitation to settle with you in the work of y^e^ ministry at Medway. Praying that the God of peace and love will continue our mutual love and more and more unite our affections to each other and y^t^ "Grace mercy and peace" may be multiplied abundantly unto you all, and asking your joynt prayers and continual supplications to y^e^ God of all grace for me, that I may prove the infinite fullness that is in Christ, receive all the Grace y^t^ I shall stand in need of to

enable me to behave myself wisely in the house of God, and faithfully and successfully discharging my duty amongst you, in all the parts of it so yt I may not only save my own soul, but yours and all such as shall be committed to my trust, that we may all at length meet together, celebrate the praises of God and the Lamb, with the church triumphant in the everlasting joys of our Lord and Master to whom be Glory, Dominion and Power forever and ever. Amen."

On the following Dec. 23, 1724, occurred the ordination of Mr. Nathan Bucknam.

"This," says Mr. Wright, "was an auspicious and happy day to the inhabitants of the town."

1724. — SECOND PASTORATE. — 1795.

This second minister of Medway was born in ———, Nov 2, 1703. He was a graduate of Harvard University in the Class of 1721, at the age of eighteen years. Mr. Bucknam came to Medway, as a candidate for the ministry, at the age of twenty, and was settled in the pastoral office at twenty-one.

Says Rev. Mr. Wright, "Although Mr. Bucknam was young and of slender constitution, he was mature in Christian knowledge and experience, and strong in the faith and hope of the Gospel. At the time of his settlement he was deservedly considered as an able, pious, and promising young man; and much was hoped, under God, through the instrumentality of his public and private labors. As to his religious sentiments, they were Calvinistic. He firmly believed in those doctrines which are usually called the Doctrines of Grace or the Doctrines of the Reformation. These he faithfully and unequivocally preached." The ministry of the Rev. Nathan Bucknam stretches across a period of more than "three-score years and ten." It covers nearly half the years that have elapsed since his settlement; it is a longer period than that of the aggregate of the five next succeeding pastorates, which reach to the commencement of the present. This surprising period is from 1724 to 1795;

but the last ten years of this time the venerable Pastor was relieved of the active duties of his office.

Rev. Mr. Bucknam kept some brief account of the Church and its doings while he was in his active ministry. The paper-covers and fly-leaves of this ancient volume of Church Records are covered with entries of the marriage ceremonies he performed. The first marriage, that the young Mr. Bucknam solemnized, was at the house of Capt. Edward Clark (who lived where Mr. Putnam Clark now resides), March 17, 1725. The happy bridegroom on that occasion was Jonathan Metcalf, and the bright-eyed, beautiful bride was the Captain's eldest daughter, a young lady of twenty summers. The record is carefully made that "they had been posted fifteen days as the Law directs."

Some pages of this ancient Church Record are filled with an alphabetical list of Baptisms. The number of these is large, since in those days it was counted a blessed privilege by parents to consecrate their offspring to the Lord; insomuch, that the Half-way Covenant was devised in order that persons, who were not experimental Christians, could be admitted themselves, with their children, to this holy rite.

The heading of this list of Baptisms runs thus:—

"*We must believe in the ability, authority and faithfulness of Baptism.*"

1 *Peter* 3 : 21. "*Whereunto Baptism doth also now save us.*"

"*It saves us* by virtue of ye Holy Spirit which accompanies this ordinance.

"*It saves us*, as it admits and incorporates us into ye society and family of those who are to be saved.

"*It saves us*, as a proper instrument appointed by our Lord for yt purpose.

"*It saves us*, as it is a pledge of ye pardon of our sins, and as it is an assurance of our redemption and salvation.

"And thus it appears yt salvation was one of ye grand ends of ye institution of this sacrament."

Thus Dr. Edwards, of Baptism, p. 580, vol. 1.

Under this substantial heading are recorded alphabetically an extended list of Baptisms:—

E.g., under the letter "A" are registered seventy-four names, of which full nine tenths are that of "Adams."

Under the letter "B" there are seventy-nine recorded, among which we find the names Bucknam, Baulch, Bacon, Bullard, Bullen, Barbar, Broad, Boyden, Bailey, the catalogue under this letter closing with the children of Adam Bullard, named Peggy, Cyrus, Jemima, Adam, and Lois.

Under the letter "C" are entered eighty-five, and nearly every name is "Clark." There occur more than once the familiar names of Elijah and Abijah and Jotham and David; yet none of these are the ones with us to-day.

Under the letter "D" are the names of seventy-three precious infants, brought in the arms of parental faith and love to the Baptismal Font; and *every one* is a *Daniell* or *Daniels*. The last entry made here is this: "Nov., 1788, was baptized a child of Jesse Daniels, named Mary."

Under the letter "P" are a hundred and thirteen names recorded; and we are thus assured that young "Partridges" were numerous in those days.

Thus under each letter is an extended list. And I find under the letter "N" these entries:—

"*Sept.* 16, 1739. I baptized London and Sambo, Negroes, the former, ye negro of Jasper Adams, ye latter, ye negro of Wm. Burges."

"*Nov.* 29*th*, 1741 I baptized Stephen and Charles, negroes, the former ye negro of Lieut. Timothy Clark, ye latter ye negro of Capt. Nathl Whiting."

April 30*th*, 1758. I baptized Jethro, a mulatto, the servant of Thos. Harding."

"*Oct.* 27*th*, 1782. I baptized my negro woman, Flora."

This Flora was baptized under the Halfway Covenant.

Under date of,

"*Dec.* 20*th*, 1741. Upon ye desire of Saml Harding and wife to have a negro child baptized wh yy had took in its infancy for yir own. It was put to the brethren, whether, they thought masters and mistresses might offer up ye servants that they had a property in, in their minority, and they had a right to baptism upon yr account. It passed in the negative."

The entire list numbers eight hundred and thirty-three persons who received baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, at the hands of this servant of God, Rev. Nathan Bucknam. Then follows a record of those who were "received into covenant and put themselves under y^{e} watch and care of this Church." This list includes a hundred and nineteen persons who came under the "bonds of the Covenant," and received Baptism for themselves and their children. This Halfway Covenant, adopted by the Massachusetts Churches in 1662, continued in the practice of this Church for eighty-five years, up to the year 1800. Nine persons were thus admitted to the early ministry of Rev. Mr. Wright, making the whole number thus recorded one hundred and twenty-eight.

"*The Covenant propounded to those that come under the Bonds of the Covenant, read as follows:* —

"You are now in full communion with the church of Christ, purchased with the price of his blood; and you do seriously, freely and forever in the presence of God, by whom you expect shortly to be judged and by whom you hope to be acquitted, and in the presence of an innumerable company of elect angels, and in presence of this assembly, give up yourself to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, avouching the Lord Jehovah to be your God. You give up yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ as unto your Prophet, Priest, and King for ever, promising by the assistance of the Spirit of Grace to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, answerable to the high and holy vocation wherewith you are called. You give up yourself and posterity to this Church, submitting to the rule and discipline of it, putting yourself under the watch and care of it, promising to embrace counsels and reproofs with humility and thankfulness. You promise to attend the worship of God with us so long as Divine Providence shall give opportunity, and take all possible care to prepare yourself for the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and when you have reason to think by the blessing of God, upon your diligent endeavors, you are in some good measure qualified therefor you will renew Covenant with God, and wait upon him in that holy institution, and walk as becomes a Christian in all holy conversation and godliness.

"This is what you consent to and promise, which being done, it follows —

"We the Church of Christ in this place acknowledge your covenant relation to us, and do take you under our Christian watch and care, promising to admit you to all these privileges, that thus your sacred relation doth or may entitle you unto, and to watch over you with a spirit of meekness, love and tenderness, as the Gospel enjoins us, and to continue our ardent prayer to the God of all grace for you that you may have grace to keep this covenant that you have in so solemn a manner entered into, that the sure mercies of the everlasting covenant may be your portion.

"Amen."

The above and the Covenant propounded to those who are admitted to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper are in the same handwriting, but without date.

"George Adams and his wife, Aug. 25, 1725," were the first persons received by Rev. Mr. Bucknam, under this "Half-way Covenant," and the last person thus received was admitted May 18, 1800, by Rev. Mr. Wright, her name was Unice Clark; she subsequently, Jan. 29, 1809, was received into the Church, by accepting the Church Covenant, which is recorded as follows:—

"*The Covenant to be propounded to those that are admitted to the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper:*—

"You are now in full communion with the Church of Christ, purchased with the price of his blood: and you do seriously, freely and forever in the presence of God, by whom you expect shortly to be judged, and by whom you hope to be acquitted, and in the presence of an innumerable company of Elect Angels, and in presence of this assembly, give up yourself to God the Father Son and Holy Ghost, avouching the Lord Jehovah to be your God. You give up yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, as unto your Prophet Priest and King forever, promising by the assistance of the Spirit of Grace to walk in all the commandments and ordinances blameless answerable to the high & holy vocation wherewith you are called. You give up yourself and posterity to this Church, submitting to the rule and Discipline of it, putting yourself under the watch and care of it, promising to embrace counsels and reproofs with humility and thankfulness, and daily to attend the ordinances of Christ in this church as long as your opportunity thereby to be edified in your holy faith shall be continued to you.

This you promise.

We, then, the Church of Christ in this place, do joyfully and charitably receive you into our sacred fellowship & communion as one whom we

hope and trust the Lord has received ; and we promise to admit you to all the Ordinances of the Gospel in fellowship with ourselves and to watch over you with a spirit of meekness love and tenderness, as your holy relation unto us calls for: and to continue our ardent prayers to the God of all grace for you, that you may have grace to keep the covenant that you have now in so solemn a manner, before Angels and us entered into that the sure mercies of the Everlasting Covenant may be your portion. Amen.

The first person received by Rev. Mr. Bucknam into this Church was Samuel Ellis, under date of April 18, 1725 ; and the last name entered upon the list in his handwriting is recorded thus, "June 28, 1789, was admitted into this Church, Capt. Jeremiah Daniel." This was the grandfather of the late Dea. Paul Daniel. The whole number received into the Church by Rev. Mr. Bucknam exceeds two hundred.

Some records of the doings of the Church during the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Bucknam is made under this heading : —

"The Votes and Acts of y^e^ Chh. of Christ in Medway.

"I, Nathan Bucknam, was ordained Pastor of y^e^ Chh. December 23, 1724."

The items of business transacted by the Church in this long period are all recorded in less than seven pages of the old Record Book, and pertain mostly to the election of Deacons and some three or four cases of Church Discipline, and few other matters of Covenant and Church regulation.

There were no less than thirteen Deacons chosen while Rev Mr. Bucknam was pastor. At the first Church Meeting after his ordination, Jan. 12, 1725, the record reads, —

"John Partridge was made choice of for y^e^ first Deacon. At y^e^ same meeting also Ebenezer Thompson was chosen Deacon." "At y^e^ same meeting likewise put to vote, whether y^e^ sacrament of y^e^ Lord's Supper should be administered in y^e^ Chh. every two months. It past in y^e^ affirmative."

The practice of this Church is still in accordance with this vote.

No other matter except the choice of Deacons seems to have

come up for action before the Church until "*April* 12, 1734, after Lecture y^e^ Chh. was stayed upon y^e^ uneasiness of" a certain brother at the way the Pastor administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was his custom to vary from the exact words of the Scriptures, and make some remarks at the table. This liberty troubled one brother, and he brought it before the Church, and a vote was taken and the course of the Pastor sustained by the lifted hands of every voting member except the complainant. Record is made of a very solemn meeting of the Chh. *Oct.* 8, 1736 (one hundred and forty years ago). The meeting was held in the meeting-house, and the great body of the Church was present. After fervent prayer was offered,

"Every one present set their hands to y^e^ covenant in which covenant in y^e^ 3^d^ particular, there is mention made of our walking as a particular Congregational Church of Christ &c. and it is here to be observed y^t^ before y^e^ signing of this covenant I declared over and over in y^e^ presence of y^e^ Church, that by this I would not be understood to oblige myself to go in every particular, according to y^e^ platform, and particularly to have lay Ruling Elders but, principally, y^t^ y^e^ vote of y^e^ brethren should be asked and took in every thing y^t^ belonged to you and y^t^ there could be no valid act in y^e^ Church without y^e^ consent of y^e^ major part of the brethren, and upon this condition and according to this explanation of y^t^ expression, signed it with y^e^ brethren."

This shows us Rev. Mr. Bucknam's Congregationalism.

The Church Covenant here referred to, with signatures attached, is not probably in existence, but was doubtless identical, or nearly so, with the Covenant under which, fourteen years after, Oct. 4, 1750, "y^e^ Rev. Mr. Bucknam gathered a Church and pronounced them the Second Church of Christ in Medway." The commencement of "*Article Third*" is as follows: —

"We do give up ourselves to one another in the Lord, and according to the will of God freely covenanting and binding ourselves to walk together as a particular congregational Chh. of Christ in doctrine and discipline," etc.

Vide Church Records of Medway, West Precinct.

This public renewal of Covenant, by each one subscribing with his own hand, made the occasion one of deep solemnity. And to this act, Rev. Mr. Wright credits largely the deepened spirituality in the Church that followed, and which developed into a revival of religion in 1741, the most marked that had hitherto occurred in the history of this Church, the results of which were the addition of some fifty persons to its membership.

The additions to the Church and the increased spiritual strength, with an increased population, led doubtless to the formation of

THE SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST.

It appears, that in the twenty-fifth year of Rev. Mr. Bucknam's ministry a movement was made to constitute a Second Precinct in the westerly part of Medway. This was owing to the great inconvenience to which the people there were subjected in attending public worship at the old Church, there then being no road directly across the Black Swamp, so called, and on petition they were granted an Act of Incorporation under the name of the West Precinct of Medway, Dec. 29, 1748. This West Precinct embraced what was known as the New Grant, and small parts of the adjacent towns of Wrentham, Bellingham, and Holliston.

The West Precinct being established, steps were immediately taken to build a Meeting-house; and so rapidly was the work carried forward that the West Precinct Meeting-house was raised on Thursday, April 6, 1749. This was just three weeks before the Second Meeting-house was raised in the East Precinct. The buildings were about the same size and in much the same style. "They were originally," says Rev. Mr. Wright, "very decent and commodious buildings; and at the time they were erected were considered the most elegant houses of public worship in this vicinity." They were built without steeples, and both their external and internal resemblance to each other

was considered very striking. How soon public religious service was held in the new Church of the West Precinct I am not informed. But the pastor of the First Church took a great interest in the enterprise, and the Second Church was gathered by him.

It appears that Oct. 4, 1750, was a day set apart for Fasting and Prayer, and the record is, "After exercise y^e^ Rev. Mr. Bucknam gathered a Church and pronounced them the Second Church of Christ in Medway."

On the 8th of October the new Church met and chose one Capt. Nathaniel Whiting for their moderator till they should have a minister ordained. At this meeting a call was extended to a Mr. Jonathan Derby to become their minister. This call Mr. Derby declined. The next April (8th), 1751, Mr. Samuel Haven was called to settle. He also declined. And Feb. 14, 1752, an invitation was extended to Rev. David Thurston, who returned his answer of acceptance, dated April 29, 1752, and was accordingly ordained the first pastor of the Second Church of Christ in Medway, June 23, 1752.

Rev. Nathan Bucknam preached the Ordination Sermon. Rev. Mr. Thurston was a native of Wrentham, and graduated at Princetown. He remained Pastor of the Second Church for a period of seventeen years, when, at his own request, by reason of ill health, he was dismissed June 22, 1769. After his dismission Mr. Thurston retired from the ministry, and settled upon a farm in the town of Oxford ; he subsequently removed to Auburn, and afterwards to Sutton, where he died, May 5, 1777, at the age of fifty years.

During this first pastorate there were seventy-nine persons added to the Church, and twenty-three came under the bonds of the Covenant. In a brief biographical notice of Rev. Mr. Thurston, Rev. Mr. Blake says, —

"No materials are in our possession for forming an opinion of Mr. Thurston's literary abilities. He is remembered as not efficient enough to combat and overcome the difficulties in

his infant Church. He yielded to them, and escaped by resignation. No writings of his are known to exist as an index to his attainments as a theologian or skill as a preacher." (See *Hist. of Mendon Assoc.*)

In the autumn following Rev. Mr. Thurston's resignation, Oct. 23, 1769, the Church invited Mr. Samuel Wales to become their Pastor, who declined Jan. 22, 1770. The next October Rev. Nathaniel Niles was called, who also declined. Rev. Mr. Niles was afterwards for many years the somewhat eminent minister at Abington.

Oct. 19, 1772, the Church summoned Rev. Mr. Bucknam and some other neighboring ministers to revise their Covenant and submit it for their adoption ; and the Covenant, as revised, was adopted by the Church. Dec. 14 following, having been destitute of a settled pastor for more than three years, an invitation was given to Mr. David Sanford, who accepted, under date of Feb. 13, 1773, was ordained April 14, 1773, and became the second Pastor. Rev. Dr. West, of Stockbridge, preached the Sermon of Ordination. Rev. Mr. Sanford was a native of New Milford, Conn. He graduated at Yale College in 1755. He commenced the study of Divinity with Rev. Dr. Bellamy, but completed it with Rev. Dr. Hopkins, who was his brother-in-law. At the age of thirty-six he was settled in Medway. During the Revolutionary War he was appointed Chaplain in the army, and served for a short time. While in the active duties of the pastorate he received a stroke of paralysis in 1807, which terminated his public labors ; and after some three years of painful illness he died April 7, 1810, in the thirty-seventh year of his ministry and the seventy-third of his life. Rev. Mr. Sanford was a man of fine personal appearance, with sharp, piercing eyes, commanding presence, and strong, clear voice. He was possessed of rare abilities, well-learned in the Scriptures, and was eminent as a preacher. He was a power in his own Church and in the region. He usually preached without written notes and swayed his audience at will.

In 1775 the Second Church abolished the practice of the Halfway Covenant; in 1776 adopted a written Confession of Faith; and Feb. 8, 1776, held a somewhat remarkable meeting for the confession of sins. In this confession, which was drawn up in writing, the Church confessed the following sins: —

"(1.) The Halfway Covenant; (2.) The neglect of Christian watchfulness; (3.) The neglect of the Discipline of the Church; (4.) The neglect of the Means of Grace." The influence of this meeting was most favorable. In the course of Mr. Sanford's ministry several seasons of Revival interest were enjoyed. In the winter of 1784 about one hundred were brought to Christ. Rev. Mr. Sanford was to some extent a writer of articles for publication.

After an interim of some four years, Rev. Jacob Ide, of Attleborough, was ordained pastor of the Second Church, Nov. 2, 1814. Dr. Woods, of Andover, preached the Ordination Sermon, and Rev. Mr. Wright, of the First Church, gave the Right Hand of Fellowship. Rev. Mr. Ide was a graduate of Brown University in 1809, studied theology at Andover, where he graduated in 1812. At the time of his settlement in Medway he was twenty-eight years of age. He married Miss Mary Emmons, daughter of Dr. Emmons of Franklin. He and his wife are both living. Rev. Dr. Ide is at the advanced age of ninety-one years. He has, beside his pastoral labors, been an editor, an author, and a teacher of theology; some forty persons have come under his instructions in preparation for the Ministry.

In 1832 Dr. Ide received repeated invitations to assume the Chair of Theology in Bangor Seminary, but although urged very persistently to accept the position, he finally concluded to remain with his people. Oct. 20, 1850, Rev. Dr. Ide preached a "Centennial Sermon of the Second Church of Christ, in Medway." The text was, "Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old: the rod of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein

thou hast dwelt." Ps. 74 : 2. This sermon the Church voted to publish, but I have never been so fortunate as to see a copy.

After an active pastorate of some fifty years Rev. Dr. Ide retired from public service, and in 1865 Rev. Stephen Knowlton was settled Colleague Pastor.

The ministry of Rev. Mr. Knowlton was one of no ordinary ability, and greatly blessed. His preaching was with power, and many were brought to receive Christ as their Saviour. He met some embarrassments, which his successors have not encountered. After a pastorate of some seven years he received an invitation to another field of labor, and resigned in order to its acceptance, and was dismissed Nov. 20, 1872.

He was succeeded, the following May 7, 1873, by Rev. S. W. Segur, who, after a short but efficient ministry, died in the midst of great usefulness, Sept. 24, 1875, universally beloved and lamented. The present Junior Pastor, Rev. James M. Bell, was installed Sept. 26, 1876, in whom the hearts of the people seem happily united, and he has entered upon a ministry of great promise, bringing to it a ripened experience and unquestioned ability.

The Second Church of Christ in a period of a hundred and twenty-six years has settled six Pastors, elected ten Deacons, and for some years has had the largest membership of any Church in the town. It is a daughter of which the mother Church has occasion to-day to be proud.

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHURCH RESUMED.

It is evident from the Records that the members acted in harmony, and sustained, with great unanimity, their Pastor, Rev. Mr. Bucknam, throughout his long ministry.

The very few cases of discipline that came up were treated with great candor and consideration, in the interest of the right and for the purity and good name of the Church.

More than twenty years passed, and no member was arraigned for misconduct; the first case of discipline was

that of a member received from another Church by letter. Cases of discipline were not infrequent from laxity in this matter, as is too often the case now, but because the members were received with great care, and felt responsible for a Christian life, without reproach, for the sake of Christ and the honor of the Church.

To illustrate the strictness of those times: The charge was brought and sustained against a certain brother, of desecrating the Sabbath, and he was denied all Church privileges until he had given signs of true repentance of his sin, and had made a public confession of the same before the Church in the presence of the whole congregation. A dozen years after, another case was introduced, in which there was a dispute in regard to an account; and the charge was "the false entry of one dollar." This case gave occasion for four different meetings, and occupied the attention of the Church for a year and a half, and was finally disposed of by the public payment of the one dollar to the complainant, and the mutual confession and Christian forgiveness of the concerned parties. I think there were but two other cases in the whole period; one was, that of a member taking personal exception to some other member, and on that account absenting himself from the Communion; and, on asking the privilege, was allowed to commune for a season with some other Church, in the hope that he would very soon become reconciled to his brother, which proved to be true

The only remaining matter, which seriously engaged the attention of the Church, and was recorded by Mr. Bucknam, was the admission of certain persons, who were at the time under the censure of the Second Church of Christ, to which they belonged.

We find under date of "April 3d, 1778," the following entry, "Stayed the Church after Lecture, read the petition of Dea^{n} Sam'l Fisher, and Mr. Daniel Pond and several sisters of the other Chh. in this Town, desiring they may have the

favour and liberty of enjoying christian privileges with us, the First Chh. of Christ in said Medway." These persons, it appears, had become disaffected from the time of his settlement with the Pastor of the Second Church because, as they say, in doctrines,

"1. He denies imputative guilt.
2. He denies imputative righteousness, and
3. He makes God the Author of sin."

Hence they had absented themselves from the Communion, and were under censure of Excommunication. They had sought, but been denied, letters to some other Church. They had called an *ex parte* Council, and by their advice made request to be received to this Church.

It was after much inquiry and deliberation, that their request was granted; they were received, Oct. 2, 1778. In consequence of this procedure, after some correspondence, the Second Church withdrew fellowship from this Church; and so, although several unsuccessful attempts were made to restore fellowship, the two Churches, mother and daughter, lived estranged for a period of thirty-two years. But at length, while Rev. Luther Wright was Pastor, and largely by his efforts, through the able instrumentality of Revs. Drs. Prentiss of Medfield, and Emmons, of Franklin, the breach was healed. The Record states that at that time "all the members respecting whom the controversy originated are gone to stand at a higher tribunal than earth affords; that the members of the churches are completely changed." It was, by advice of the above-named clergymen, finally agreed by the two Churches "that without demanding concessions on either part they embrace each other in Church fellowship, in a spirit of love & tenderness." And thus a complete reconciliation was reached, March 11, 1810, at which date the First Church writes to the Second Church thus:—

"And now, brethren, we commend you and ourselves to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build us up and to give us an in-

heritance among all them which are sanctified, imploring the divine guidance and direction that we may receive each other as becometh saints ; that we may walk together in the unity, faith and hope of the Gospel of Christ. Finally, brethren, let us feel the weight, and live under the influence of this Apostolic direction. 'Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, & the God of love and peace shall be with you.'"

"In behalf of y^e^ church,

(Signed) Your servant in the faith and hope of y^e^ Gospel,

LUTHER WRIGHT, *Pastor.*"

Thus a breach which was made in 1778, thirty-two years before, was healed to the joyful satisfaction of all persons in both the Churches, fellowship and communion were restored, never again, as we trust, to be disturbed.

NOON HOUSE.

Shortly after Rev. Mr. Bucknam's settlement, about the year 1730, it appears that there was a subscription raised for the purpose as expressed, "To erect an house fifteen feet square in some convenient place near the meeting-house for our convenience on y^e^ Sabbath between meetings." This subscription paper was headed by "Jonathan Plympton, £3—0s—0d."

This building was boarded on three sides, being open toward the south ; in the centre was a large, flat stone, on which in cold weather a fire was kindled, there being an opening in the roof overhead for the smoke to escape ; and all around were pine benches, where the people sat and ate their Sabbath lunch. This was called the Noon House.

This old Noon House or one like it was standing in 1816, which is within the memory of persons now living. It was at length superseded by a Parish House, erected in 1822.

After the burning of the first meeting-house, January, 1749, public worship was conducted for a time in the dwelling-house of Capt. Joseph Lovell, Esq. The people, however, took immediate steps to rebuild.

1749 — SECOND MEETING-HOUSE — 1816.

Hitherto the town had transacted the secular business of the Church, but now, by a warrant issued under authority of King George II, in the twenty-second year of his reign, to one Samuel Harding, Esq., a meeting of the citizens of this part of the town was called, and the First Precinct in Medway was organized Feb. 3, 1749. At this first meeting Samuel Harding, Esq., being chosen moderator and precinct clerk:

It was "Voted to build a meeting-house for the public worship of God." "Then voted to choose five men to be a committee to manage the affair of building said house, viz.: 1st, Sam[l] Harding; 2d, Dea. Thomas Harding; 3d, Lieut. Timothy Clark; 4th, Ensg[n] Joseph Richardson; 5th, Jona. Adams, Ju[r]. Voted 1600 pound old tenor to be assessed on polls & estates in said First Precinct, towards building said house." This sum was about £213 lawful money or $1,000 our currency.

The First Precinct, under date of

"April 5, 1749, Voted, That y[e] committee should build the meeting-house 42 feet long & 33 feet in width and twenty feet high between joynts." "Voted that the said meeting-house shall be raised about y[e] width of y[e] house, toward y[e] North from y[e] spot of land where y[e] old meeting-house stood."

It is said that Adam Bullard, Esq., lies buried just where were the steps at the entrance to this second meeting-house. It was further,

"Voted, that y[e] provision that is to be made for y[e] raising said meeting-house shall be by a free contribution, then voted that Samuel Ellis, Dea. Barbar, Joshua Partridge and Samuel Hill, shall take care that there shall be an equal or suitable quantity of Cyder, Rum & Beer brought to said house and a baiting bitt for the men before the Raising be finished."

The raising of this meeting-house came off on Thursday, April 27, 1749. The old house was burned the 18th of the previous January; and thus, in a little over three months,

the trees that were standing in the forests were felled, drawn to the spot, hewn into timber, framed, and raised into a meeting-house, about a half larger than its predecessor. The 21st of May following, just three weeks from the Sabbath next after the raising, the people gathered for public worship, and Rev. Mr. Bucknam preached for the first time in the new meeting-house. Yet it was not finished; and while everything, so far, had gone on very harmoniously and with such dispatch, there was yet to come up quite a division of feeling and considerable delay before the house was completed. The question arose, "whether y^e^ Precinct will have an Alley three feet and a half wide straight from the great double doors to the Pulpit" in their new house. At the first meeting of the Precinct to consider this weighty matter, they voted *not* to have it. Another meeting was called, and they voted to have the "alley." Then a meeting was called to reconsider. There was great excitement through the Precinct, meeting after meeting held; finally, at a crowded meeting, they polled the house. All in favor went to one side, all opposed, to the other, until counted; it was found that there were twenty-seven in favor of the alley, and twenty-two opposed to it; thus, after a year's delay, great stir, much talk and many meetings, it was decided; and the alley was made "from the great double doors straight to the pulpit."

The seating of the new meeting-house was given in charge of a committee, who were to make allowance between age and estate according to their best judgment. In 1766 Moses Richardson, Elijah Clark, and Jonathan Adams were instructed to "seat the meeting-house one pound of estate to a year's age as near as may be."

About ten years after the house was built, the Precinct appropriated "three pounds and eighteen shillings to be laid out in coloring and repairing the meeting-house." For some number of years they paid Rev. Mr. Bucknam "for his negro

woman keeping the meeting-house, 9s. 4d." In 1769 special seats were built for the negroes to sit in. April 30, 1770,

"Put to vote to see if it be the minds of the Precinct, That the new seats built for the Negros at each end of the Public meeting-house in said Precinct below, shall be the seats, and the *only seats*, in the s^d^ meeting-house for the Mulattoes, Negros, and Indians of this Precinct to sit in, in times of Divine Service, during the Precinct's pleasure."

"Resolved in the affirmative."

"Put to vote, to see if it be the minds of the Precinct to prohibit the Mulattoes, Negros, & Indians of this precinct, sitting or standing in any of the allies or on the stairs of the s^d^ meeting-house in times of Divine Service."

"Resolved in y^e^ affirmative."

"Put to vote to see if it be the minds of the Precinct to choose a committee of three men, to inform the masters of the Negros Mulattoes & Indians of this Precinct, of the above mentioned votes & resolves, and to desire them in the name of the Precinct to conform themselves thereunto and to order their servants into the seats built and provided for them."

"Resolved in y^e^ affirmative."

"Jonathan Adams Cap^t^. Jona. Adams, and Isaiah Morse was unanimously chosen for the s^d^ Committee. . ."

"Put to vote to see if the Precinct will choose a committee of three men to prosecute the disobedience or non observance of the afore mentioned votes & resolves of this Precinct relating to the Mulattoes, Negros &c."

"Resolved in the affirmative."

"Adjourned to last Wednesday in May, 1770," at which time "Moses Richardson Oliver Adams and Jonathan Adams y^e^ 3d was chosen for the s^d^ committee.

Then the s^d^ inhabitants granted the sum of 38£—os—od for the necessary charge of the s^d^ committee."

The following autograph receipt is extant: —

"Medway, June 18, 1736. Received of Jasper Adams the sum of one hundred and forty pounds for a negro boy named London, being in full.

£140—0—0. Per me,

Nathan Bucknam."

This was in New England, nay, in Medway, a little more than a hundred years ago!

At the time of his settlement, Rev. Mr. Bucknam was unmarried; but after laboring here some four or five years, he

brought to Medway a wife, in the person of a lady of culture and accomplishment, two years younger than himself. From whence she came and her maiden name are not ascertained. To Rev. and Mrs. Bucknam were born nine children, two sons and seven daughters. Their names, in order of birth, were, Anna, Nathan, Margaret, Mary, Samuel, Elizabeth, Catharine, Sarah, and Lucy. All were baptized in infancy. The sons died young. The daughters, that lived to grow up, all united with the Church and were married well. One of them married Dea. Asa Ellis, who removed to Western, now Warren. With the enlargement of his family it was not strange that the "ninety pounds a year" was found a small salary, and especially, as articles of family use grew much higher in price. As years wore on it became beautifully, or rather, sadly less; at length Mr. Bucknam made bold to communicate with the town on this subject I have in hand the original document, dated April 24, 1736, and signed "Nathan Bucknam," by which he made request as follows:—

"Mr. Daniel,"

"Be pleased to put it into your warrant for May meeting that it is my desire that the Town would take into consideration the circumstances of things and allow me something more for my support, in some way which they shall think most suitable and best, what they have already granted being altogether insufficient as the times now are.

Medway April 24. 1736. yours to serve, Nathan Bucknam."

"To be communicated to the rest of y^e^ select men."

Some ten years later the good man pours out his burdened and troubled soul thuswise and heroically.*

"Christian Friends & Brethren. It is a great Grief & burden to me to have the affair of my salary or support come so often into agitation which is so unacceptable to you. I am not in the least measure disposed to contend with you, but I would remind you of and propose to you a few things with relation to the matter before you, which I trust I may do

* This original document within a few days came to light among old papers in the attic of one of our ancient homes.

without giving any just matter of offence — And in the first place, I would remind you that at my first treating with this Town as to my settlement and support among them, I considered that the then smallness & weakness, and such as were concerned in Town affairs at that Day, can't but be sensible that I accepted of a small salary for that time & for much less than they could obtain a Gentleman for, which they invited to settle among them before I came, and for considerable less than was adjudged to be sufficient salary for a minister in a family state, by such as were most capable of determining such an affair — and as oft as I have laid the matter before the Town, my desires, I think, have been always just, reasonable and moderate (as may be made to appear to Unprejudiced Judges) — and now once more I send to you that have power to transact Town affairs, the following proposals, which I think, to be so highly just and reasonable that Every man that has attained so far as to Moral Honesty, must comply with — viz — Either first that the Town chuse a Committee of three or five of as Solid, Judicious and Intelligent men as any you have among you, who shall Engage to be faithful in searching out and acquainting themselves as thoroughly as may be with the price of the most Material Articles of Livelihood of food and raiment, and find as nigh as they can the disproportion of the prices from the time of my settlement and the present, to lay before the Town at May Meeting for their acceptance, which when well & duely proportioned, I will sink as much out of, as any one man in the Town pays to God and the Country — or secondly to leave what the disportion of things are from my setling till now, and so what I ought to have, to impartial or disinterested men mutually chosen by the Town & myself — Every thing bares such a demand that I find that it is absolutely necessary that something be done in this affair or I must unavoidably sink and come to nothing — If the Town don't see good to Comply with Either of these proposals or to make any to me that I can accept of, you will drive me to Commit the affair where I trust solid reason will be heard, Every Conclusive Argument have its weight and Justice be Awarded, which is all I seek, and should be glad to have this done in a more private manner, but if that can't be — Those that are the cause of a more publick process, I hope will bear the blame. for I assure you it is no ways agreeable to me, and I believe will not be profitable to you — I would therefore advise & Entreat you to look upon it as a matter of weight and Importance. a matter in which Religion and Conscience are concerned and well worthy of your most serious Consideration least you offend God and do iniquity — I wish you the Divine presence and Conduct in this, as also in all your affairs. That Peace, Truth and Righteousness may ever attend you is the Earnest desire of your sincere Friend & Servant of your Souls,

NATHAN BUCKNAM.

"March 9th 1746/7

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What action the town took on receipt of this particular communication I do not know. But they were often called to vote upon the matter of salary, and especially as money depreciated; for in 1757 it took seven pounds and a half to make one pound of lawful money. The salary voted Mr. Bucknam in 1780 was £780, not far from $4,000 our currency, but actually worth less than $500.

But this matter of minister's salary finally settled down upon a basis of about "sixty pounds lawful money."

In 1788 Mr. Bucknam had a Colleague, when he relinquished his salary for an annuity of fifteen pounds, which he receipted for with his own hand on the Parish Book, the last time, March 12, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

In the summer of 1778 Rev. Mr. Bucknam was out of health, and unable to preach for several months; and the Parish supplied the pulpit at their own expense.

When past eighty-two years of age, he arranged with the Parish to settle a Colleague, and terminated his active ministry in the sixty-second year of his pastorate, May 14, 1786.

Rev. Mr. Bucknam preached his Farewell Sermon from the text, Jeremiah vi.: 16: "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls;" and closed the solemnity by singing the 122d Psalm (Tate and Brady's Version),

"Oh, 't was a joyful sound to hear," etc.

Of Rev. Mr. Bucknam's qualities and labors as a minister, it appears that he held and preached unequivocally and earnestly the doctrines of the Gospel of Christ. He was a man of quick impulses. "He sometimes," says Mr. Wright, "spoke unadvisedly with his lips, under excited feelings, but was soon calmed and gave way to the dictates of sober reason and religion."

He must have been a man of great natural and acquired resources and of wonderful administrative ability to have

retained such a hold upon the people, and to have led the Church harmoniously through so many years of active ministration. As we have seen, Rev. Mr. Bucknam closed his active ministry May 14, 1786; but he still retained the pastoral relation until his death, which occurred in "the 92^{d} year of his age, in the 71st year of his ministry and the 67th of his married life on Fryday evening February 6th 1795."

His funeral was attended on the following Thursday, Feb. 12, with great solemnity and respect. The procession entered the Meeting-house, where Rev. Dr. Thomas Prentiss, of Medfield, delivered a discourse on the text, 2 Peter, 1 : 13-14: "I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

"The discourse," says Dea. Clark, of that day, in his Diary, "was well adapted to the occasion. Rev. Jason Haven, of Dedham, and Rev. Benjamin Caryl, of Dover, conducted the devotional service. Afterwards the procession proceeded to the grave, from thence to the dwelling-house; the Church walking before the procession."

Mrs. Bucknam survived her husband only a little more than a year. She died on Sabbath evening, May 1, 1796, in the ninety-first year of her age; she was buried on the next Thursday. The service was in the Meeting-house, and conducted by Rev. Jason Haven of Dedham.

There are numerous traditional reminiscences of the old minister, Rev. Nathan Bucknam, still rehearsed in the Parish. An attempt was once made to poison himself and family by a basket of meat, left on his door-step at evening; but his faithful negress, Flora, being suspicious of evil, first cooked a piece for the cat, and in a very few minutes the pet pussy of the minister's house was no more. When Flora told her master what had transpired, Mr. Bucknam is said to have replied to her, "I shall live my appointed time." It is said

that to the close of his life he took his food from a *pewter plate.*

He was proverbially an honest man, and so taught his people; and to this day, people say, "*As honest as they were in Parson Bucknam's day!*" There are now living and in this audience before me, two persons, and the only that I know, who remember to have seen the second Pastor of this Church. I refer to Mr. Oliver Phillips and Joseph L. Richardson, Esq.

The tradition is, "that, although preaching industriously to this Church so many years, Rev. Mr. Bucknam had upwards of sixty MS. sermons in advance of those he had *opportunity to preach.*"

Rev. Mr. Wright says of this honored servant of God, "Although he survived his public labors, he did not survive the affections of his people. Indeed, his praise was in all the Churches. Many were witnesses of his fidelity and enlightened zeal, of his laborious and persevering exertions to promote the spiritual interests of the people of his charge. His memory will be cherished with respect by this people."

After Rev. Mr. Bucknam retired from active service, his pulpit was supplied for a time by a Rev. Mr. Andrews, and subsequently by Rev. Walter Harris. The latter was a favorite student of theology with Dr. Emmons; and his name is of some interest to me, as he was subsequently settled the first Pastor of the Church in Dunbarton, N. H., my native town, where he preached for forty years. He was the Pastor of my parents and my grandparents. I can just remember him. Dr. Harris stood a prince among the ministers of that region; he was in fact the Dr. Emmons of New Hampshire.

Early in the year 1787 (*i. e.*, Feb. 26) the Rev. Benjamin Green was engaged to supply the pulpit as a candidate for settlement. The Church, and the Parish also, were deeply impressed that to settle a minister was a grave responsibility, something which they nor their fathers had done; for a

minister had not been ordained pastor here for sixty-three years, since their grandfathers' day. So affected were they, that the Church called a special Day of Fasting and Prayer in view of it. And we find the Parish in public meeting, March 29, 1787, voting, —

"That we will join with the Church in this place, in setting apart a Day of Fasting and Prayer for direction in calling and settling a Gospel Minister in this place."

That day was observed by both Church and Parish. As we have seen, Rev. Mr. Bucknam, April 25, 1787, relinquished his salary and accepted an annuity of £15, as he says, —

"For the sake of peace and that the way may be plain, and all obstruction with respect to the resettlement of the Gospel ministry removed."

June 13, 1787, a call was extended to Rev. Benj. Green to settle as Colleague Pastor. This call Mr. Green declined, and assigned this reason, "That the salary voted he judged not sufficient for that purpose."

The following August, the call was renewed, and a committee of the Parish called on Mr. Green to communicate their action and confer in regard to the salary. Mr. Green returned answer, "That he was otherwise engaged and therefore would not confer on that subject."

However, Feb. 12, 1788, the call was again renewed, the salary to be £75 during Mr. Bucknam's life, with a settlement of £200.

This third call was accepted, and Mr. Green remitted £5 of his salary to the Parish, for which generosity they passed a vote of thanks.

Rev. Benj. Green was ordained June 25, 1788, Colleague Pastor of the First Church of Christ. Rev. Mr. Cushing, of Waltham, preached the sermon, taking for the text, 1 Cor. 1 : 22-24 :

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom : But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness ; But unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Rev. Mr. Clark, of Lexington, delivered the Charge to the Pastor; and the Right Hand of Fellowship was given by Rev. Elijah Brown, of Sherborn.

It is said that Joseph Lovell, Esq., entertained the Council and learned gentlemen present on the occasion at his own expense, and that some two hundred persons sat down to dine at tables spread under the elm trees near his house. These trees are still standing.

1788 — THIRD (COLLEAGUE) PASTORATE — 1793.

Rev. Mr. Green was a graduate of Harvard University in the Class of 1784. He commenced preaching in Medway as a candidate early in 1787, but was not settled for more than a year after. His ministry continued only about five years. He was dismissed at his own request, Feb. 28, 1793, some two years prior to Mr. Bucknam's death.

Scarcely any records remain of the Church under the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Green. Mr. Wright says "eleven persons were received to the Church under this ministry." Near its close, and the probable occasion of Mr. Green's resignation, there were evil surmisings sown, by evil-minded persons, through the Parish, and scandalous stories circulated, so that great excitement for a time prevailed. But from the best sources of information, there were no valid grounds for the evil reports; and when matters were sifted, and the truth known, the cloud upon the good name of the abused Pastor was lifted and scattered, and the pastoral relation dissolved in "mutual charity with each other, and mutually recommending each other to the grace of God and the charity of all."

Upon leaving Medway, Rev. Mr. Green removed to Berwick, Maine. He left the ministry, became a lawyer, and was subsequently a judge of some eminence in that State.

He is said to have been a man of fine abilities, and much respected for his talents and acquirements. Doubtless,

but for the blight of a surmising and malicious tongue, he might have served in the ministry here for many years with acceptance and success. He preached his Farewell Sermon, March 17, 1793, taking for the text, Acts 20: 24–27, 32: "But none of these things move me," etc. This Discourse was printed and widely circulated, by the wish of many of his hearers.

It has been told me, that a last and very important service was rendered by Judge Green to his old Parish years after his dismission. Being in Boston, he was met by his old friend Joseph Lovell, Esq., who was there to appear for East Medway in Court in some case involving large interests. The lawyer engaged to attend to the case did not handle it successfully, and it was quite apparent that it would go against East Medway. At this juncture, Mr. Lovell asked Judge Green to appear and speak in its behalf, which he did, and the case, that all thought lost, was gained. Having spoken, Judge Green suddenly disappeared from the court-room; and his friend, Mr. Lovell, had no time even to thank him for the service, and never saw him afterward.

It was shortly after the dismission of Rev. Mr. Green, that the Parish voted to give up the practice of seating the Church, *i. e.*, according to dignity by reason of age and estate. This old custom, at which we now smile, was in those days a matter of great importance, as for example: there was a Parish Meeting called March 30, 1785, for this purpose, viz., —

"To hear the Petition of Oliver Richardson & others, to try the minds of the Parish by a vote, to see whether the front pews in the gallery is higher in dignity than the 2nd seats in the side galleries, and if passed in the Affirmative to direct the seating Committee to make such alteration in the Galleries as shall be reasonable."

And at the meeting it was voted, —

"That Front pews in the Gallery is higher in Dignity than the second seats in the side Gallery."

And the Committee was instructed accordingly.

So much for Dignity in the House of God. But customs change, and this could not stand in a country where all men were to be equals before the Law, and equals before the Lord, the Maker of them all.

It appears that it was voted to give a certain portion of the Gallery to those who would lead in the singing in public service; and since the power of song did not depend on "age or estate," persons of mixed dignity must, if they sat in the place assigned, be thrown together. It was a perplexity; and nine substantial citizens were chosen a Committee to deliberate what could be done. They were men of good sense, of progressive ideas, and reported in favor of abandoning the old habit of "seating the Church," and accordingly, April 25, 1794, the Parish voted to sell the pews for one year to the highest bidder. The renting of pews has been the ordinary practice ever since.

After the leaving of Rev. Mr. Green, the Church and Society were for some time in an unsettled state; and in this interim, before the next Pastorate, a period of some five years, the Pulpit was supplied by more than twenty different candidates.

Among them were Rev. Messrs. Samuel P. Bailey, Daniel C. Sanders, Simeon Dagget, Aaron Green, Benjamin Fredenburg, Ebenezer Withington, Bezaleel Pinneo, Nicholas B. Whiting, Jairus Remington, Jacob Abbott, William Mason, M. Fletcher, Isaac Braman, James Hawley, John Ripon, Silas Warren, Luther Wright, Timothy Williams, Nathan Tilton, and William Bigelow.

In 1794 a call was extended to Rev. Aaron Green, but the vote was not unanimous, especially in the Society; and on reconsideration the Society voted not to concur with the Church. Whether this was because of objection to the man, or a prejudice still existing in the Parish against the name of Green, I am not informed.

Two years after, in 1796, a call was extended to Rev. Isaac Braman, which, although not unanimous, was accepted; and

the day of his ordination was appointed, and the Ecclesiastical Council met June 21, 1796, and after protracted deliberation concluded not to ordain the Pastor Elect, but adopted the following Minutes: —

"Considering the divided state of the Church and Society we think that neither Mr. Braman's comfort and usefulness nor the peace and prosperity of the Church and Society would be promoted by his continuance and settlement among them. We therefore advise Mr. Braman to withdraw his Affirmative Answer and the Church and Society to consent, without proceeding to complete their proposed connections, which they may do by adopting this result."

Which was accordingly done.

This Mr. Isaac Braman was subsequently settled in Rowley, that part now known as Georgetown. He was ordained there June 7, 1797, Pastor over the First Church, now called the Peabody Memorial Church, where he fulfilled a distinguished ministry of some fifty-five years.

So we see, that a minister not good for one place may be good for some other Parish. His widow, a second wife, still resides in Georgetown.

The Pulpit of the First Church continued vacant another year, and was supplied by various candidates. Since the dismission of Rev. Mr. Green there had been more than twenty candidates employed; the one supplying was a Mr. Bigelow. It was a beautiful summer Sabbath morning, the roses were in bloom, and the birds were praising God with their sweetest carols, June the 25th, 1797, just nine years since the ordination day of the last Pastor, there appeared in the pulpit, in place of the regular candidate, a young minister, a graduate of Harvard University the year before, who interested the congregation very much. This young minister was Luther Wright, and when their present engagements were up, the Parish Committee arranged with him to supply the pulpit for three months, which he did with great acceptance.

Mr. Wright then went to Brentwood, N. H., where he preached several months; but while there the Church and Parish united in giving him a call to return to Medway and become their Pastor. This call to Mr. Wright was dated Jan. 4, 1798, and the salary offered was $266.67, with a settlement of $666.67, to be paid within two years; under date of April 29, 1798. Rev. Mr. Wright returned answer as follows:

"To the First Church and Religious Society in Medway:

Gentlemen, — Whereas you have been disposed, under the permission of Providence, to give me an invitation to settle with you as your Gospel Minister. and having, I trust, duly considered and deliberated upon the important subject, I shall improve the present opportunity to answer your invitation.

I am not insensible of the important consequences which my decision must involve, not only as it respects myself, but more especially this Church and Society. The issue of my determination I view as not merely connected with our temporal happiness, but with our spiritual and eternal interest. The subject, therefore, is equally interesting to us both. Previous to my determination I have taken into consideration every known circumstance connected with this event. Your transactions to this effect I hope and trust have been the result of dispassionate and serious deliberation. The auspicious unanimity manifested in your invitation, and in the greater part of relative proceedings, has been a consideration highly influential in my decision. The advice of ministers and friends has been solicited and the direction of Heaven fervently implored.

Having thus seasonably and prayerfully attended to this subject, I conceive it my duty to accept and do hereby publicly declare my acceptance of your invitation to settle with you in the great work of the Gospel Ministry.

Although I view the encouragement provided in my salary as inadequate to a comfortable support, under the present state of articles of life, yet in confidence that you will be disposed to make such further provision, as your ability will allow and my situation require, I have thought it proper to accept that part of the encouragement without alteration.

And I now earnestly request you to beseech the Father of mercies that through his grace he would enable me faithfully to discharge the great work to which I am called: that I may be enabled to inculcate, both by precept and example, in public and in private the doctrines and duties of our Holy Religion. And may the God of all grace grant, that you and your posterity may receive not only temporal but spiritual advantage from the preaching and ordinances of the Gospel.

(Signed) LUTHER WRIGHT."

"Brentwood, N. H."

Rev. Mr. Wright was "ordained to the momentous work of the Christian Ministry," and installed Pastor of this Church June 13, 1798. Fourteen Churches were represented in the Council.

Rev. Josiah Bridge was chosen Moderator. Rev. Moses Adams, of Acton, the former instructor of the Pastor elect, preached an appropriate Ordination Sermon from Isa. 50: 7. — "For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." The Charge to the Pastor was given by the Moderator, who was to become, two years later, the young minister's father-in-law. Rev. Thomas Prentiss, of Medfield, gave the Right Hand of Fellowship.

1798 — FOURTH PASTORATE — 1815.

Rev. Luther Wright was born April, 1770.

He graduated at Harvard in the Class of 1796, and publicly professed Christ and became a member of the First Church in Cambridge in November of the same year, Rev. Abiel Holmes being the Pastor; and the 13th of June, 1798, was ordained Pastor of this Church.

Rev. Mr. Wright was not married for nearly two years after his settlement.

It appears from the "Massachusetts Mercury," that on the very day that the "Death of Washington" was announced in Boston, which was Dec. 23, 1799 (nine days after its occurrence, the time it took then for news to come from Washington to Boston), there was a wedding at the Parsonage in East Sudbury, and the good Parson's daughter Nancy was the Bride, and the young Minister of Medway the happy Bridegroom.

This is the printed record under "Marriages," in the "Massachusetts Mercury Jan. 3, 1800": "At East Sudbury, on Monday, 23d ult., Rev. Luther Wright of Medway to Miss

Nancy Bridge, daughter of the Rev. Josiah Bridge." And soon after, the Pastor of Medway brought his young bride to town; and they settled down in the house now occupied by our venerable friend, Oliver Phillips, Esq. There they continued to reside during his ministry of some seventeen years. Rev. Mr. Wright, in person, was a short, thick-set man, of fair, full countenance, still remembered by some here present. A good lithograph of him hangs on the wall of the house where he lived.

Rev. Mr. Wright's ministry was a useful one. Some fifty persons were added to the Church, and during the first and last years of his Pastorate there were seasons of marked refreshing from the Lord. He was devoted to his work, and while he met with some discouragements, he was loved by his people, and showed himself a man of ability and sagacity. He was largely the instrumentality of bringing about the renewed fellowship of the First and Second Churches, after an alienation of thirty-two years.

During his ministry there came up a case of discipline, which engaged the Church for a long time.

It was concerning an alleged embezzlement in the settlement of an estate. The property said to have been wrongfully appropriated consisted of "one Bolster and two Pillows and seven yards of new Cloth belonging to said estate." The complaint was first introduced Dec. 26, 1802, and on consideration was not entertained; but it was persistently urged upon the attention of the Church, giving occasion for innumerable meetings, which resulted, at last, in the calling of an Ecclesiastical Council of the most prominent Churches, from Dedham to Worcester. This was in 1808, six years after the case was first brought into the Church.

This Council met Oct. 18, 1808, Tuesday, and remained in session five days, until the following Saturday; and the result reached and unanimously voted was, that, —

"The charge was not sustained, but that the complainant had violated his Covenant in absenting himself from the Holy Communion: Because a supposed offence of a member of a Church does not warrant the offended member to abstain from the performance of his duty."

This case illustrates how much trouble, without any good ground, one member may give the Church, — "How great a matter a little fire kindleth."

Nov. 4, 1813, Rev. Luther Wright preached a Centennial Sermon of the Town, a copy of which the Selectmen requested for printing, and it was accordingly published. To this Sermon I am indebted for some of the facts herein presented.

In the latter part of Rev. Mr. Wright's ministry a movement was started, and work actually commenced, on a new meeting-house, the third in order of erection.

Various discouragements and certain scandalous stories circulated led Rev. Mr. Wright to resign his pastorate. His Letter of Resignation was read to the Congregation on the Sabbath, July 9, 1815. A Council was called, and investigated the rumors adverse to the character of Mr. Wright, at his own request, and found no grounds whatever for the slightest suspicion to rest on his good name. Finally he was dismissed by advice of Council, Sept. 20, 1815, "who unanimously voted":

"That Rev. Luther Wright be recommended in his moral, Christian, and ministerial character to the fellowship of the Churches and to employment in the Ministry of the Gospel."

The Church, at a meeting held Sept. 13th, voted unanimously the following: —

"Whereas the Rev. Luther Wright is about, in the Providence of God, to remove from us, and to have his pastoral relation to us dissolved, we owe it to truth and justice to express our belief, that during his Ministry amongst us he has been able and faithful in this important work, and we do express our approbation of his Christian and ministerial character, and we do with sentiments of friendship and Christian affection recommend him and his ministerial labors to sister Churches wherever God in his providence may call him."

(Signed) "ASA DANIELS, JR., *Moderator pro tem.*"

Rev. Mr. Wright preached his Farewell Discourse Oct. 1, 1815 (just sixty-one years ago this day), taking for his Text, Acts 2 : 29 : "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you." On the same day he administered the Communion, and there were presented two children for Baptism. One was the son of Marcus Richardson, who received the name of "Simon Hill," for the Senior Deacon of the Church; and the other, the Son of Samuel Seaver, was named "Luther Wright," for the retiring Pastor.

Rev. Mr. Wright's Printed Sermons are, a Discourse preached May 25, 1806, at the Funeral of Capt. Cyrus Bullard, Master of the Brig Litteller, who died on his third voyage, April 13, 1806, of fever, on the Island of St. Thomas, at the age of twenty-six years. Capt. Bullard was a young man of great promise. The Text chosen was, Jer. 45 : 3 : "Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the Lord hath added grief to my sorrow: I fainted in my sighing and I find no rest"; and a Discourse already referred to, Centennial of the Town, the Text being Exodus 12 : 14 : "This day shall be unto you for a memorial."

After his removal from Medway, Rev. Mr. Wright resided for a time in East Sudbury, to which Church he took a Letter of Dismission. Subsequently he removed to Woburn, where he lived some years.

He was accustomed to visit Medway occasionally. I am told that he was here on his eightieth birth-day and preached to his old people, taking this Text, Joshua 14 : 10 : "Lo! I am this day fourscore." This was his last visit to the scene of his early labors in the Gospel ministry.

He lived to be eighty-eight years and two months old, and died June 21, 1858. Mrs. Wright survived him nearly three years, and died Feb. 23, 1861, aged eighty-four years eleven months and eight days. The graves of this aged pair are in the cemetery in Woburn, Mass.

1816 — THIRD MEETING HOUSE — 1850.

Early in 1813 a movement was started by Joseph Lovell, Esq., and others, to build a new meeting-house. A vote of the Parish was obtained the sixth of September following. The location selected was Bullard's Hill, somewhat to the southward of the old meeting-house. Some three acres of land were purchased of Mr. Adam Bullard, who gave one acre in addition, and small parcels of land adjacent were also given by Mr. Asa Darling, Timothy Hammond, Esq, and Mr. Jonathan Bullen, amounting in all to nearly five acres.

These were liberal grounds for the proposed edifice. The site chosen on which to erect the building was the very summit of the hill, obliging much labor and expense in so grading it, as to make it accessible by carriage, or on foot. The ascent, after all, some of you will remember, was very steep. These lands in later times were purchased of the Parish by Maj. Geo. Holbrook, and are still retained in possession by his descendants. The avails, $200, were expended in grading and fencing the grounds about our present House of Worship.

The plan of the new meeting-house made the dimensions fifty-three feet square, with a projection in front of thirty feet by fifteen. The posts were twenty-nine feet, and it was voted to build a "steeple instead of a cupola;" with this exception, and some other slight changes, it was to be built after the plan of the new meeting-house, then building in West Medway. No steeple, as yet, had been builded in the town, and the old East Parish said, "We must have a steeple to our new Church." But alas! whether in rebuke, or not, of an undue pride is not determined; but certainly, to the grief of the builder, this first steeple did not stand long, for it had hardly pierced the skies, was yet unfinished, when that fearful gale of Sept. 23, 1815, came, took it completely off, hurled it to the ground, and broke it into a thousand fragments. But the generous people came to the

help of the contractor and speedily the steeple was rebuilt and held its lofty place until the meeting-house was taken down and removed to serve other purposes.

The Building Committee chosen were Mr. Theodore Clark, Joseph Lovell, Esq., Messrs. Comfort Walker, Moses Adams, and Thomas Harding.

The building contractor was Malachi Bullard. The cost was six thousand and six hundred dollars.

This new house of worship was near completion: when the first church-bell was cast in Holbrook's Bell Foundry. The happy thought seized the Parish to purchase it; and, accordingly, it was hung aloft in the new Church-steeple May 13, 1816, where it pealed forth its glad tones each Lord's Day for many years, reminding the people of the Sabbath and God's worship in the Sanctuary.

The house completed, the pews were appraised, "except the First Pew at the right hand of the Broad Alley, which is to be left for the use of the Minister of the Parish."

The Communion Table and the Minister's Chair were made by the skilled cabinet-maker of the Parish, Mr. Eleazer Daniels. The former is still in useful service in the Vestry below; the latter stands in your Pastor's Study.

Public Worship was held in the new meeting-house for the first time Sept. 8, 1816, and it was dedicated Nov. 20, 1816. It continued to be occupied for worship until 1850, thirty-four years. It was then sold, taken down, removed to Rockville, re-erected, and now stands, bereft of its tall spire, emptied of its former glory, a gloomy, unoccupied building, with no token of its original sacredness.

The Parish Hall, which was erected in 1822, was sold, removed, and made into a dwelling-house, which stood on the site now occupied by the Parsonage, but was burned to the ground in 1871. To-day there is nothing to remind one that the three first Meeting-houses of this Church, with their adjuncts, viz. Noon House, Parish Hall, and Horse-sheds,

for almost a century and a half, occupied yonder sand-hill, through which now passes the railroad cut, and the steam-car whistles on its iron way, — thoughtless, that once just overhead were the Sanctuary and the Pulpit, where the good Parson preached his Gospel Sermons and said his Sunday Prayers.

Not long after Rev. Mr. Wright's dismission, the Parish Committee secured the services of a young minister from Canton as a candidate. Accordingly one Sabbath morning there ascended the pulpit-stairs of the old First Church a young man of fine personal bearing. When he stood up to read the hymn the congregation were peculiarly struck by the contrast presented with their old minister. Rev. Mr. Wright was exceeding short, this young candidate was exceeding tall. As all marvelled inwardly at his height, some whispered, "Surely our pulpit has a minister in it to-day nearer Heaven in one respect than any one who ever stood in it before!" But by the time he had concluded the service, many thought that he must be nearer Heaven in another sense also; for he prayed and preached with no common unction and power. Rev. Luther Bailey made a good impression on the Medway people, and very shortly Church and Parish agreed in sending him an invitation to settle as their Minister.

The annual salary was to be six hundred dollars and his settlement two hundred dollars. Some correspondence passed between the parties, and Rev. Mr. Bailey finally returned his answer of acceptance, as follows: —

"To the Church and Society in the East Parish of Medway: —

Brethren and Friends, — You having by the direction of Providence, as I trust, proceeded to request me to settle with you in this Gospel ministry, I have seriously and prayerfully attended to the subject. Although every circumstance is not yet fully decided, yet as much time has already elapsed since your invitation, which has nearly exhausted your patience, — and I confess I have become weary of suspense, — it is thought advisable

that the answer be given conditionally, leaving these circumstances to be hereafter arranged.

I am very sensible, my Christian friends, of my inadequateness to this important and interesting work. Under this impression I am desirous of taking to myself humility. Every uninspired man ought to remember the words of an inspired Apostle, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But the great Head of the Church has declared to every faithful servant, 'My grace is sufficient for thee; thy strength shall be equal to thy day.' Relying upon this grace and promise, not, however, without trembling lips for my unworthiness; and feeling a desire to be useful, if possible, to my fellow-creatures, and particularly to advance the Redeemer's cause among you, my friends, I answer your invitation in the affirmative.

May the Great Head of the Church bless this union. I shall need not only the promised assistance of the Spirit, but your indulgence, your charity, your prayers. These I have no doubt I shall receive. I am resolved with you to spend and be spent in the cause of our Divine Redeemer, determining 'to know nothing among you' in preference to 'Christ and Him Crucified.' When He shall appear, it is my ardent prayer that we, with all the 'redeemed of the Lord, may also appear with Him in glory.' For this purpose may He bless his own word and work.

(Signed) LUTHER BAILEY."

TAUNTON, Aug. 14, 1816.

About this time the new meeting-house was near completion, and it was voted to hold public worship in it the second Sabbath in September. Accordingly, Sept. 8, 1816, the first service was held in the new house; and arrangements were completed to have the Dedication and the Ordination fall upon the same day. The day appointed was Nov. 20, 1816; accordingly a large Council was called, and the representatives of twenty-four churches met on the great occasion. The examination of the candidate was highly satisfactory, and the Council proceeded to the public services of the Dedication and the Ordination. Rev. Daniel C. Sanders, D. D., of Medfield, preached the Dedication Sermon from the Text, 2 Chron. 5:14: "The glory of the Lord had filled the house." Rev. James Wilson, of the Second Church in Providence, made the Dedicatory Prayer. Rev. Edward Richmond, D. D., of Stoughton, preached the Ordination Sermon. Text, John 13:35. Rev.

Dr. Sanders made the Ordaining Prayer. Rev. George Morey, of Walpole, gave the Charge to the Pastor, and the Rev. Jacob Ide, then recently settled over the Second Church in Medway, gave the Right Hand of Fellowship. Rev. Dr. Ide, now ninety-one years of age, is probably the only one of that large Council of fifty-four persons, who is now living.

The record made by the Scribe concludes thus: "All things having been done decently and in order, the Council was dissolved."

Rev. Joshua Bates, of the First Church in Dedham, was the Scribe. One of this Council, gathered from the Churches within forty miles, was Rev. Wm. Cogswell, then the young Pastor of the Third Church in Dedham, who was the father of the present Pastor's wife. The Ordination of Rev. Mr. Bailey and the Dedication of the then elegant Church edifice fell on the one hundred and first anniversary of the settlement of the first Pastor, Rev. David Deming, which occurred Nov. 20, 1715. The sermons preached were printed.

1816 — FIFTH PASTORATE — 1835.

Rev. Luther Bailey was born in Canton, Mass., 1783, and first united with the Church of his native town. He graduated at Brown University in the Class of 1808. He married a Miss Anne Peck, of Providence, R. I, a young lady of an intelligent and independent mind. In 1811 he was the Preceptor of Bradford Academy, and subsequently, of Taunton Academy for some five years; while at Taunton, he preached for some time in Mendon and supplied other pulpits in the vicinity occasionally. He was a brother of Hon. John Bailey, who was for some years a Member of Congress from this State.

At the time of Rev. Mr. Bailey's settlement there were seventy-four members of this Church. During his ministry there were added about a hundred and forty persons, mostly

by confession of faith. The largest accessions were in the years 1827 and 1834. But no year of his ministry passed without some additions. He must have been a very faithful and laborious Pastor. He met with some peculiar trials, owing to the great controversy which arose in the Churches of this State about that time, in regard to the Person of Christ. But, although troubled at the division in his own Society near the close of his ministry, he bore himself with remarkable prudence, and retained the respect and confidence of his people, as a good man and devoted Christian minister.

After a pastorate of nearly twenty years, Rev. Mr. Bailey asked a dismission, which was granted, by advice of Ecclesiastical Council, Dec. 29, 1835. In the Result of Council this was adopted, — "That the Council recommend the Rev. Luther Bailey, as a Minister of the Gospel in good and regular standing, and they do hereby commend him as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ to the affection and confidence of the Churches."

About the time of Rev. Mr. Bailey's settlement, the First Sabbath School in the town was organized. A little after, a Weekly Prayer Meeting was started in Rockville on Saturday evenings (this was in 1822) by the efforts, principally, of two earnest Christian men living in that part of the Parish. I refer to Mr. Timothy Walker, afterward Deacon of this Church, and for many years the Superintendent of the Sabbath School, and Mr. Matthew Brown, who afterward succeeded Dea. Walker as Superintendent of the Sabbath School. Both these gentlemen are now living, and the former gladdens us with his presence on this occasion. Mr. Brown was quite tried, I am told, at first, as to what he should do. He was expected to be at his place of business at all hours of day and evening; and on Saturday night, of all other times, his patrons expected to find him at his post. However, he decided to attend the Prayer Meeting, and accordingly posted a notice, politely

informing his customers, that for one hour, naming the time, on Saturday evenings, he should be engaged; at all other times he should be happy to serve them. The result was, his business prospered even better than before, showing that it is not a vain thing to serve God, to be fervent in spirit as well as diligent in business.

This meeting was sustained for years with much interest and good result.

It was in 1822 that the Parish Hall was built, much to the accommodation of the young and prosperous Sabbath School, which occupied it for many years.

In the year 1828 this Church voted to hold the Monthly Monday Prayer Meeting, the object of which was to pray for Foreign Missions, which at that day was a new and exciting enterprise undertaken by the Churches.

The only printed Sermon by Rev. Mr. Bailey that has come under my notice, is one that was preached on the Sabbath, Oct. 17, 1830, at the Funeral of Miss Betsey Adams. The Text was, Ps. 39 : 4 : "Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Miss Adams was the daughter of Mr. Moses Adams.

About the year 1834 there was a movement by some in the Parish to set up another religious service, and procure "preaching of some other denomination;" and for a time those interested held an extra service in the Parish Hall by the courtesy of the First Parish. In 1835, near the close of Rev. Mr. Bailey's pastorate, some more than forty members of the First Parish withdrew for the purpose of forming a new Religious Society. This decided step led the First Parish to withhold the use of the Parish Hall, and the new organization set about the erection of a meeting-house.

Meanwhile Rev. Mr. Bailey had resigned, but was still residing in the Parish. After hearing various persons, their meeting-house being completed, the new Society invited their

old minister to become the Pastor. This new organization had taken the name of the "Third Congregational Society in Medway." And accordingly eleven persons, members of the First Church, having requested, but not received dismission, "Wishing," as they say, "to associate in public worship with the 'Third Congregational Society in Medway,' agree and covenant together to be

"THE THIRD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH."

And they add, "We mutually agree to walk together in Christian fellowship and to adopt as our Church Covenant the Covenant used in the said First Church."

This agreement has appended the following names, viz.: —

"Luther Bailey, Adam Bullard, Lewis Harding, Kezia Harding, Olive Harding, Sarah Harding, Mary Richardson, Kezia Harding, Eliza Adams, Dorcas M. Wright, Abigail Lovell."

An Ecclesiastical Council was convened on Wednesday, Dec. 7, 1836, which recognized this Third Congregational Church and Society; dedicated their meeting-house, and installed Rev. Mr. Bailey the Pastor.

The Sermon preached was by Rev. William Ritchie, then Pastor of East Needham, formerly the minister of Canton, by whom Rev. Mr. Bailey was received to the Church. This new Church maintained service a number of years, and its membership increased, Rev. Mr. Bailey being their minister; but, on his retirement, the organization gradually diminished, until public service was discontinued. Some of the members returned to the old First Church, some have removed from town, others have died; so that, the Third Congregational Church and Society has become virtually extinct. Those, yet living amongst us, generally attend these services, and walk in harmony and fellowship with this Church and Society. Their meeting-house was removed to the opposite side of the street to a site near the meeting-house of the

First Church. Subsequently it was yielded to the Episcopal Church, and fitted up for a place of worship to accommodate St. Clement's School, which was located here for a few years. It was finally burned in the winter of 1870–1. Rev. Mr. Bailey, on retiring from public service, worshipped with this congregation. He was present in the Council that installed Rev. Mr. Roberts. His death occurred at the age of seventy-eight years, Dec. 19, 1861. He died "beloved and respected by all the people" among whom he had lived and labored for so many years.

Mrs. Bailey survived her husband, and died June 16, 1863.

Their daughter, Mrs. Baker, we are happy to see with us to-day; another daughter resides in Philadelphia; and the only son has for many years been in the successful practice of medicine in Pittsfield.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHURCH, RESUMED.

Soon after Rev. Mr. Bailey's dismission, the Rev. Eli Thurston, who afterward became the somewhat eminent Dr. Thurston of Fall River, was employed to supply the pulpit here for one year. The preaching of Rev. Mr. Thurston was very direct and pungent. I am told that he held up to the people, in an impressive manner, the so-called, "Stern Pauline truths of the Gospel," taking many Texts from the Epistle to the Romans.

His preaching seemed to be attended remarkably by the power of the Holy Ghost. The whole place was moved; a great awakening came; as the results of the Revival there were some sixty persons received to the Church. On a single day, April 2, 1837, forty-five were received by confession of faith. Many of these have died and removed, yet some remain with us, and are to-day the most substantial members of this Church.

It was about this time that the Church Covenant was revised and Articles of Faith adopted, as they now appear in our printed Church Manual.

In July, 1837, a perfectly unanimous call was given to Rev. Sewall Harding, of Waltham, to settle Pastor of this Church. The salary voted was $600, with a vacation of two Sabbaths Rev. Mr. Harding was a native of Medway; had fitted for college, in part, under the instruction of Rev. Mr. Wright; had become interested in personal religion, while a student here, and united with this Church May 30, 1813. After graduating at Union College, in the Class of 1818, he returned to this town and studied Theology with Rev. Jacob Ide, D.D., Pastor of the Second Church. He married for his wife one of the most devotedly pious and active Christian young ladies of this Parish, Miss Eliza Wheeler; and at the time he received this call, he had been for some years Pastor of the Church in Waltham. Rev. Mr. Harding returned his letter of acceptance, dated Waltham, Sept. 15. 1837, and was installed the sixth Pastor of this Church Nov. 1, 1837.

Ten Churches were represented in the Council. Rev. David Long, of Milford, was chosen Moderator. The Sermon of Installation was preached by Rev. Jacob Ide, D. D., of the Second Church; Installing Prayer by Rev. Mr. Cummings, of North Wrentham; Charge to the Pastor by the Moderator; the Right Hand of Fellowship by Rev. David Brigham, of Framingham; and the Address to the People by Rev. Elam Smalley, of Franklin.

1837 — SIXTH PASTORATE. — 1851.

At the opening of Rev. Mr. Harding's ministry the Church numbered one hundred and eighty-two (fifty-seven Males, one hundred and twenty-five Females). This is probably the largest living membership that the Church has ever numbered.

In this pastorate of fourteen years some sixty were added; about forty were by confession of faith. It was early in Rev. Mr. Harding's ministry that the Church passed a resolution in regard to those persons who, having sought dis-

mission regularly, but not having obtained it, set up a new organization called the "Third Congregational Church": —

"*Resolved*, That we regard ourselves as absolved from our Covenant obligations to them; and having gone out from us, we no longer regard them as members of our body."

In September, 1838, was organized

THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

The first Pastor of this new Church, Rev. David Sanford, the grandson of the second Pastor of the Second Church, was installed Oct. 3, 1838.

Rev. Mr. Sanford was a native of Medway, graduated at Brown University in 1825, studied Theology with Rev. Dr. Ide and at Andover Seminary. He was two years Pastor at Newmarket, New Hampshire, eight years Pastor in Dorchester, from whence he came to labor "amongst his own people." His ministry was one of great usefulness, for the qualities of the man made it impossible that it should be otherwise.

In 1871 Rev. Mr. Sanford relinquished the active duties of his pastorate, and Feb. 13, 1872, Rev. R. K. Harlow was installed Junior Pastor of the Church. Rev. Mr. Sanford lived in feeble health, but preaching occasionally, and in other ways, like the Master, "doing good," until his death, which occurred Dec. 17, 1875.

Rev. Mr. Harlow is fulfilling a ministry of great acceptance and ability, and with the seal of God's blessing upon it. The resident membership of the Village Church is about two hundred.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHURCH RESUMED.

While Rev. Mr. Harding was Pastor the slavery agitation commenced, and the old Church of Christ in Medway, although in her early history holding slaves, was none the less true to Christian instincts and the progress of ideas. She took decidedly anti-slavery ground, and published to

the country and the world her sentiments, as we see from the following record: "On the second of September, 1842, the Church voted unanimously the following

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS.

Whereas, The Christian Church is established to be the light of the world, and the great instrument in the great work of the world's reformation. It is therefore

Resolved, That the Church ought to bear decided testimony against all sin, and especially reprove with all tenderness and fidelity those members of the Christian body who persist in open transgression.

Resolved, That the system of Slavery, as it exists in the United States, and as tolerated in many Churches in our land, is a violation of the letter and the spirit of the Gospel; inasmuch as it withholds from almost three millions of the human family their personal freedom, denies them generally the means of education, the privileges and protection of civil institutions, the sacred rights of matrimony, and the due reward of their labor, thus reducing them to and holding them in a state of oppression, ignorance, and moral degradation scarcely paralleled in the civilized world.

Resolved, That we feel constrained, in the spirit of meekness, to reprove and rebuke all professing Christians, ministers, and Churches who tolerate Slavery in word or deed, and that we cannot extend the fellowship of the Gospel to those who continue to enslave their fellow-men after the faithful admonition of their Christian brethren.

Resolved, That these resolutions be published in the Boston Recorder, The New England Puritan, and The New York Evangelist, signed by the Pastor and officers of the Church."

"The above resolutions were signed and published as above voted.

Attest, SEWALL HARDING, Pastor."

(See Vol. IV, Church Records, page 25.)

By a communication dated April 8, 1849, Rev. Mr. Harding asked to be released from active service, and relinquished his salary with a view to the settlement of a Colleague. To this the Church and Parish consented; and Oct. 4, 1849, called as Junior Pastor, Rev. T. F. Clary, of New Ipswich, N. H. Rev. Mr. Clary declined the call. April 26, 1850, a call was extended to Rev. Albert Teele, which was also declined. Meanwhile the Parish had been busy in erecting a new house of public worship.

1850 — FOURTH MEETING-HOUSE,

The house of God in which we are now assembled.

The vote to build was passed by the Parish June 25, 1849. After some difference of view expressed, it was finally voted to erect the new meeting-house in a new locality, and the present site was chosen. The land was given for the purpose by Henry Richardson, Esq, embracing what are now commons about this edifice.

Sept. 10, 1849, Joseph L. Richardson, Jr., was chosen Building Committee; Messrs. Melvin & Page were the Contractors. The cost was about $6,000, which was covered by the valuation placed upon the pews.

This house was dedicated Nov. 13, 1850. The Sermon on the occasion was preached by Rev. Samuel Hunt, then of Franklin, afterwards the Private Secretary of our late Vice-President, the lamented Hon. Henry Wilson, of Natick. Since its erection, in 1854, the bell became disabled, and was exchanged for a new one from the foundry of Holbrook & Son. In 1857 this house was re-painted; and in 1867, thoroughly remodelled and enlarged at a cost of nearly $5,000. The gallery was lowered, a recess made in the rear of the pulpit, twenty pews added, the organ repaired, and the audience-room neatly frescoed, giving us this pleasant place of worship.

April 4, 1851, a call was extended to Rev. James M. Bacon, of Newton, which was declined.

The following Sept. 4, 1851, a very unanimous invitation was voted to Rev. John O. Means to settle as Pastor. The salary was $800, with four weeks vacation. The call was accepted. A Council was assembled Dec. 3, 1851. By advice of this Council, Rev. Sewall Harding was dismissed, and Rev. John O. Means was ordained, and became the seventh Pastor of this Church. The Ordination Sermon was preached by Rev. Benj. Tappan, D. D., of Augusta, Me.

Rev. John Dwight, of North Wrentham, made the Ordaining Prayer. Rev. J. T. Tucker, of Holliston, gave the Charge to the Pastor; Rev. A. Swazey the Right Hand of Fellowship; and the retiring Pastor, Rev. Sewall Harding, made the Address to the People.

1851 — SEVENTH PASTORATE. — 1855.

Rev. Mr. Means was a native of Augusta, graduated at Bowdoin College, and studied Theology at Bangor Seminary.

Early in the ministry of Rev. Mr. Means there occurred an occasion of great solemnity and interest to the Church and people of the First Parish. I refer to the

ORDINATION OF MR. AUGUSTUS WALKER AS A MISSIONARY OF THE AMERICAN BOARD.

After his appointment, this Church invited Mr. Walker to be ordained by them with advice of Council. This invitation was accepted.

Accordingly, Oct. 13, 1852, an Ecclesiastical Council was convened for this purpose, and Mr. Walker was ordained as a Missionary of the A. B. C. F. M. to Assyria, to be stationed in Diarbekir.

The Sermon was preached by Rev. Swan L. Pomroy, D.D.; Ordaining Prayer was offered by Rev. Jacob Ide, D.D.; Charge was given by Rev. Sewall Harding, and the Right Hand of Fellowship by Rev. Horace D. Walker.

Just before these public services of the afternoon Mr. Walker was married, in the presence of the assembly, to Miss Eliza M. Harding by Rev. Sewall Harding, the father of the Bride, assisted by Rev. H. D. Walker, a brother of the Bridegroom.

Rev. and Mrs. Walker sailed Jan. 7, 1853, for their field of missionary labor. Rev. Mr. Walker arrived in Diarbekir, on

the river Tigris, April 27, 1853, where he labored for thirteen years with great fidelity and success. He died of cholera after a short illness, Sept. 13, 1866. For a brief sketch of this good man's life and christian services, I must refer you to the *Missionary Herald*, for February, 1867. His wife soon after returned to this country, and for some years has been doing a noble service by making her residence in Auburndale a delightful home for the children of missionaries that are sent to this country to be educated.

Rev. Augustus Walker was a son of Dean Walker, Esq., a prominent citizen of the town, and for many years a devoted member of this Church.

The pastorate of Rev. Mr. Means was hardly four years in length. At its commencement the Church numbered one hundred and thirty-two members. During his ministry, twenty-six were added, fifteen of these by confession of faith. The influence of this short pastorate was very great, not only in the Church but in the whole community. A spirit of public improvement was inspired, and the name of this Pastor is still peculiarly fragrant throughout the Parish in the kindest remembrances of the people, as is his presence with us to-day one of the most gratifying features of this occasion. Rev. Mr. Means was dismissed at his own request and the regret of the people, Sept. 4, 1855. On leaving Medway he travelled abroad, and subsequently to his return was settled as Pastor of the Vine Street Church in Roxbury, now Boston Highlands, where, although having resigned the active duties for other important public labors, he still remains a revered and beloved Pastor.

For more than a year the Church was without a Pastor, and the pulpit supplied by different ministers, among whom were Rev. Horace D. Walker, Rev. Mr. Briggs, Rev. Sewall Harding, Rev. Jacob Roberts, and Rev. T. T. Richmond.

In April, 1856, the Church and Parish united in an invitation to Rev. Jacob Roberts, of Fairhaven, to become their Pastor, the annual salary to be $800, with a vacation of four Sabbaths. Rev. Mr. Roberts returned a letter of acceptance

dated "Fairhaven, June 12, 1856," and was installed the eighth Pastor of this Church Oct. 9, 1856. The sermon on the occasion was preached by Rev. James A. Roberts, of Berkley, a brother of the Pastor elect. The text was Ps. 49: 8, — "For the redemption of their soul is precious," etc. Installing Prayer by Rev. J. T. Tucker, of Holliston; Charge to the Pastor by Rev. Jacob Ide, D. D.; Right Hand of Fellowship by Rev. H. D. Walker, of East Abington, and the Address to the People by Rev. S. Harding, of Auburndale. Rev. Luther Bailey, Rev. Sewall Harding, and Rev. John O. Means, former Pastors, were present in the Council.

1856 — EIGHTH PASTORATE — 1871.

Rev. Mr. Roberts' ministry extended over a period of fifteen years, and was greatly blessed of God. Ninety-three persons were added to the Church, about seventy of these on confession of faith. Over forty were added in the single year of 1866, the results of a revival. Rev. Mr. Roberts' health failed, and he sent in his resignation Oct. 14, 1870, and it was accepted; but his pastoral relation was not formally terminated, by advice of Council, until Nov. 15, 1871, the day his successor was installed.

After Rev. Mr. Roberts relinquished active service the pulpit was supplied by various clergymen, among whom were Rev. Alexis W. Ide, Rev. R. M. Sargent, Rev. Henry W. Jones; the latter received a call to settle January, 1871, but declined it. During the following summer, Rev. Wm. F. Bacon, of Amesbury, supplied the pulpit for three or four months with great acceptance.

In September of this year an invitation to settle in the ministry was received and accepted by your present Pastor. The salary voted was $1,500. The Installation took place on Wednesday, Nov. 15, 1871. Rev. Samuel J. Spalding, D.D., of Newburyport, was Moderator of the Council. The venerable Sewall Harding, of Auburndale, Rev. John O. Means, D.D.,

of Boston Highlands, and Rev. Jacob Roberts, of Auburndale, former Pastors, were present in the Council. Rev. Dr. Means preached the Sermon; Rev. J. M. R. Eaton, of Medfield, made the Installing Prayer; Rev. Dr. S. J. Spalding, of Newburyport, delivered the Charge to the Pastor; Rev. S. Knowlton, of West Medway, gave the Right Hand of Fellowship; and Rev. Jacob Roberts, the retiring Pastor, the Address to the People.

1871 — NINTH PASTORATE. —

In these nearly five years little has occurred to mention here. Fair prosperity attends us, and a spirit of harmony and hopefulness prevails. Thirty persons have been added to the Church, and the entire membership at this date is one hundred and thirty-six (males, 41; females, ninety-five), hardly larger than it was at the settlement of Rev. Mr. Means, twenty-five years ago, but more than double the number of members at the settlement of Rev. Mr. Wright, nearly eighty years ago.

The whole number of names preserved on record of the members of this Church is seven hundred and thirty-six. This total includes only three names of members prior to the settlement of Rev. Mr. Bucknam, the second Pastor, in 1724.

At the settlement of the present Pastor the Parish felt the need of a parsonage, and soon were very willingly committed to the enterprise of building by the receipt of twenty-five dollars from an unknown hand for that purpose. A site was selected nearly opposite the meeting-house, contracts made, and in the early spring work commenced and pushed vigorously forward, so that on the first of November, 1872, the minister and his family entered upon its occupancy. Subsequently, in the autumn of 1874, by the enterprise of the ladies of the Parish, a stable was erected adjacent to the parsonage. The total cost of these new buildings, with the land connected with them, was nearly $6,000.

There is now on foot the building of a Chapel for the accommodation of the Branch Sabbath School and Sabbath Evening Service in Rockville. The movement is likely to succeed, and the Chapel will go up this winter. The Sabbath School gathered there numbers about fifty members, and a regular Sabbath Evening Service is held once a month by the Pastor, and oftener when it is practicable.

Thus, in these one hundred and sixty-two years under review, this Church of Christ has built four meeting-houses, settled nine Pastors, elected twenty-three Deacons, maintained public worship, sustained a Sabbath School for sixty years, a Branch Sabbath School for twenty years, prayer meetings weekly and monthly for three-score years, sent forth from its members eight or ten ministers of the Gospel, two missionaries, a number, perhaps a score, of ministers' wives of the very best quality, and a multitude of Christian men and women to let their light shine in widely scattered places. Who can measure the influence for good of this Church of Christ in this period of the past, or forecast what she is yet to do in the future for human salvation and God's glory!

INCIDENTAL MATTERS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Church Covenant. — This has been changed. I am undecided whether the one already introduced, written on the same sheet and by the same hand as the "Halfway Covenant," antedates the one referred to in the renewal of Covenant in 1736. It may be, that it was adopted subsequently, possibly in the ministry of Rev. Mr. Green, or early in that of Rev. Mr. Wright. It certainly was the Covenant of the Church in 1808, as we see from the Result of Council of that date, in which the following clause is quoted as from the covenant of this Church: "and duly to attend the ordinances of Christ in this Church as long as your opportunity thereby to be edified in your holy faith shall be continued to you." And it was the

Covenant in use in 1827, as a copy of it made at that time is extant, and superscribed "Church Covenant." This continued in use probably until about 1836, when the one now used was adopted, together with the Confession of Faith prefixed as found in our Church Manual, printed in 1837, and reprinted in 1870. I am not aware that this Church, until thus recently, submitted to candidates for admission, for their public assent, a Confession of Faith, but they were admitted on accepting the Covenant.

Church Music. — This has been sustained from a very early day, and regulated by the Church.

Oct. 8, 1736, the Church voted,

"That none but y^e^ Tunes set down in the latter end of Our Old Psalm Books should be set in the Church at the Sacrament and at Church Meetings."

The first Hymn Books used were the Metred Psalms, and a "New Version of Psalms, by Tate & Brady, with a small collection of Watts' Hymns." The latter was used at the close of Mr. Bucknam's Ministry. Then came "Belknap's selection of Psalms and Hymns," in Rev. Mr. Wright's day. Subsequently Watts' and Select Hymns were used, and ten years ago, in 1866, The Sabbath Hymn Book was adopted, which is still in use.

In 1794 The Parish voted a committee of nine men to consider and report: "On what principle the Front Gallery may be given to the singers." The result was that the dignifying of the pews was abandoned, and the front gallery devoted to the use of those "that carry on the exercise of singing in time of Divine service."

Appropriations of money were made by the Parish repeatedly in the early and later times for the support of a singing school, in order to raise up singers for service in the sanctuary.

Resolutions were adopted by the Church from time to time to encourage persons to take part in this important service of worship.

Nov. 17, 1806, voted unanimously the following: —

"The First Church in Medway, being sensible that singing is a part of Public Worship and that it ought to be performed by every worshipping assembly, but as it has been too much neglected, we, the Church in this place, earnestly request Mr. Joseph Abbe and Mr. Joseph Partridge to lead in singing, or any other person so disposed; also, request all the singers to join with them, that we may have singing in the congregation at all times when needed, and you shall receive the thanks of the Church."

Two years later, in 1808, the Church voted in public meeting this request: —

"That the singers among us meet and if possible unite in opening a Singing School for their own improvement and for the instruction of those young persons among us who may wish to become acquainted with this useful art."

Dec. 5, 1834, is entered in the Church Records this minute: "At regular Church Meeting, after Lecture, Brother Oliver Phillips was chosen Chorister of the Church."

This position Mr. Phillips, who is still living, and with us to-day at the advanced age of ninety, continued to hold for many years.

The reading of the Scriptures as a part of public service was not the ancient practice. It was not adopted until sometime in Rev. Mr. Wright's ministry, and then, with a struggle.

It was proposed in Church Meeting, June 5, 1806, but objected to so strongly by brethren that a vote was not pressed at that meeting; but soon afterward it was voted, and the Scriptures have been read in public service ever since. But it was doubtless regarded by the croakers of that early day as a great innovation. We see that change may be improvement; and we discover also that this Church has ever been alive to improvement by change, and has not valued and clung to anything merely because old; that it can change its practices easily, and does not care to go in a treadmill or to be kept in the old ruts. I trust this spirit is still alive in the First Church to-day.

This Church has taken action on various other matters of

discipline and practice, *e. g.*, in regard to its members joining Baptist Churches, in regard to Infant Baptism, in regard to Slavery, Dancing, and Female Suffrage, all of which illustrate the living and progressive spirit of the body exceedingly honorable to her history. But for an account of all this I must refer you to the Church Records.

Grants, Donations, and Legacies. — The Town granted to their first Pastor twenty-eight acres of land south of Bare Hills, and two acres for a "Building Lot near the Meeting-house."

The Town, under the same date, April 20, 1715, also granted twenty acres of woodland for the use of the ministry of the Church of Christ in Medway.

The first legacy to this Church was by the Will of Mrs. Mehitable Hill, widow of Enoch, who died May 10, 1798. The item of the Will read as follows: —

"I give to the Church in the East Precinct in the Town of Medway the sum of ten dollars to be kept by a Committee of the Church on interest forever. The interest to be spent, annually or otherwise, as the Church may direct from time to time."

This Mrs. Hill, whose whole estate, as appears, was worth scarcely two hundred dollars, and who could not write her name, but signed her Will thus "$\overset{\text{her}}{\underset{\text{mark}}{\text{X}}}$," has the honor of being the original founder of our Church Fund. This fund now amounts to $10,700, in investments, worth probably about $13,000. No one living knows who this Mrs. Hill was, or where she lived, but she builded in Zion a monument to her piety that will stand forever.

By bequest, Mrs. Jemima Lovell, second wife of Capt. Joseph, who died Oct. 27, 1814, left money to purchase a Communion Service for the use of the Church. This was purchased in 1817, and remained in use for many years.

June 29, 1818, the following communication was made: —

"To the First Church of Christ in Medway.

"*Beloved:* — Whereas I the subscriber being desirous of doing something for the good of this Church and the cause of religion in this place,

do offer for your acceptance the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars as a donation to this Church, to be loaned on good security to the acceptance of said Church forever, & the interest of the above sum to be spent annually in providing Bread & Wine for the Communion, if wanted. Wishing you grace, mercy & peace I subscribe myself your sister in the faith & fellowship of the Gospel."

(Signed) "EUNICE DANIELS."

"The Chh. then voted acceptance of the same," and passed a vote of "thanks to our Sister Daniels for her good will & donation to the Church." This Mrs. Daniels was the wife of Deacon Asa, the younger.

July 15, 1823, the Treasurer reported a donation of ten dollars from Joseph Lovell, Esq., and "the Church voted thanks to Br. Joseph Lovell, Esq., for his donation of ten dollars to the Church."

In his Will, the above Joseph Lovell, Esq., who died Oct. 2, 1827, made the following provision, viz. : —

"I give devise & bequeath unto the First Church of Christ in the East Parish in the Town of Medway the sum of five hundred dollars equal to silver or gold to be paid into the Treasury of said Church, and to be put on interest by said Treasurer and a Committee chosen by said Church on permanent security, and to be kept on interest until said sum shall amount to one thousand dollars: then the one thousand dollars shall be kept on interest forever, and the interest of said one thousand dollars shall go toward the support of a Calvinistic Gospel Minister in said Parish for ever, to be under the direction of the Church.

The above said Legacy is to be paid by my executor in one year after my decease.

The above said Legacy is for to lay the foundation for a Fund for the Support of the Gospel in said Parish."

Dea. Asa Daniels, who died June 7, 1840, by his Last Will and Testament made the following provisions, viz. : —

"I give, devise and bequeath unto the Church of the First Cong. Society in the East Parish in said Medway and their successors forever, the sum of two hundred dollars the capital of which to be kept entire and the income thereof to be appropriated annually toward the support and maintainance of a Protestant, Calvinistic Minister in said Parish."

In a Codicil is the following : —

"I do hereby order & declare that my will is, that if at the time of her (his wife's) decease any of such estate shall remain unexpended by her, then and in such case I give & bequeath such surplus (except the household furniture and indoor moveables) if any such surplus shall remain after the payment of my just debts and all the legacies bequeathed by me in said Will and all her just debts, unto the Church of the First Cong. Society in East Parish in said Medway and their successors forever. The capital of which to be added to the Legacy given to said Church in & by my last Will and Testament. The income only to be appropriated annually toward the support and maintainance of a Protestant Calvinistic Minister in said Parish, as is expressed in the legacy aforesaid."

The avails of the entire bequest of Dea. Asa Daniels amounted to $8,250.

The Church Fund, thus constituted by the gifts and bequests of the friends of Christ and of the First Church, has yielded annually a handsome income, which has been, and still is, of great service in the maintenance of a Gospel Ministry; and I do not think that, to any general extent, it has nourished the spirit of illiberality, as is said often to be the case. There have been other calls on the purses of the people, sufficient to keep their hearts open.

Not abusing the gifts of God, we may sincerely hope that "to him that hath shall be given," until the Parish shall "owe no man anything." Furthermore, may the means be forthcoming to erect the proposed Chapel in Rockville and to improve the vestry and grounds of this house in which we worship.

We trust the First Church still has, among the living, friends disposed and able, either while living or at least by their Wills, to cause this ancient Church of Christ to rejoice in their piety and thoughtfulness for Zion.

But above all may we hope that God, the Great Friend of past generations and of us, may grant unto us who fill the places of the honored and pious dead the richest legacies of his Spirit and grace.

We can but feel impressed with the power for good, the moral and religious force, this Church of Christ has been all

these years in the town of Medway, and also with the great indebtedness of the people now living within this ancient Precinct, whether attendant on these services or not, to their ancestors and predecessors, who established so long ago and have maintained to this day this Church of Christ and its public worship.

Of the great multitude of interesting local facts of the Town and this ancient Church, I have brought to your notice but a few; yet perhaps enough to show that the spirit of the early days and of later times has been a religious spirit; that the men and women, who settled these lands, thought, first of all, for the religious welfare of themselves, their children, and those that might succeed them. While we honor their piety and build their sepulchres with our praises, let us not condemn ourselves. My dear hearers, the religion that was good for souls a century and a half ago is good for our souls to-day. It is the same old and blessed religion of God! It has eternal truths as its foundations and infinite love as the walls of its salvation. Its towers and bulwarks are glorious in tradition and history. Let us, then, love the old religion and the old Zion of Medway. Let us stand in their support and enjoy their sacred service and communion feasts. Let us not forget our Jerusalem, but, may Zion be our chief joy!

Let our prayer ever be, "Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces." "Because of the house of the Lord our God will I seek thy good."

"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem," and let us say to one another, to our children and our children's children by our example and piety and sacrifice, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," "To behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple."

1816 — 1876.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

SABBATH SCHOOL

OF THE

First Church of Christ

IN

MEDWAY, MASS.

Sixtieth Anniversary,

Oct. 1, 1876.

By the Pastor.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Sixty years ago, in the autumn of 1816, the First Church in Medway dedicated a new and, for those days in the country, a beautiful House of Public Worship. It was the immediate predecessor of this in which we are assembled.

On the same day of this Dedication, Nov. 20, 1816, a new Pastor, Rev. Luther Bailey, was ordained over the Church. He was the fifth Pastor in order of settlement.

This ancient Church of Christ, thus installed in a new house of worship, and placed under the pastoral care of a young, devoted, and talented minister, we may easily conceive, felt a new impulse of life and encouragement.

Almost coincident with these new possessions and these brightened prospects, there was awakened a new spirit of Christian activity and enterprise.

This showed itself, at first, among a few of the ladies. Some of the younger ladies, especially, were quite stirred up to undertake active Christian work. There were those here who had intimate friends at school in Bradford Academy, who, about that time, were quite ardently interested with others of that institution in the Mission Work among the Cherokee Indians.

The spirit prevalent in Bradford was communicated through these young lady acquaintances to the ladies here, and there was a deep interest felt to do something for the Master, if not among the Cherokees, yet here at home. About this time also, it would seem providentially, there appeared articles on Sabbath Schools in good "Dea. Willis's Paper," published in Boston, "The Youth's Companion," which was then, as now, taken in some of the homes of the Parish. There appeared in "The Youth's Companion" of sixty years ago some account of Sabbath Schools just started in many of the suburban towns; and these accounts were read with lively interest by these ladies.

They soon learned that in Dedham and in Medfield something of the kind was being tried, and said among themselves, "Why should there not

be something new under the sun in Medway"? Borrowing suggestions from sources above-mentioned, inspired by a spirit of labor and enterprise in Christ's service, these young ladies made up their minds to start in this place a Sabbath School.

Their plans were not actually carried into execution until the next spring. There were obstacles to be surmounted. The winter was approaching, which was unfavorable for starting; they had no suitable place for holding the school in cold weather, and the movement was exceedingly unpopular. Some of the best people looked very coldly on the enterprise, and thought it had better not be undertaken.

I am told that, for some time, the young minister himself seemed to hesitate to declare himself favorable; the Deacons and prominent men in the Church hesitated much longer than he did, even said, "These young folks are taking too much upon themselves"; and, with a shrug of sarcasm, some said, "These women will be in the pulpit next."

Undaunted, however, at the coming of the next spring with its warm sun and singing birds, these persevering ladies secured a large, unoccupied upper room in the building which, in later years, was the residence of Dr. Gale. The floor of that large, empty chamber was laid with loose planks, so that great care was needed that the smaller children should not fall through the wide cracks.

There the Sabbath School movement in Medway was inaugurated by the pious devotion and perseverance of a few christian ladies, in the spring of 1817.

The number who were actively engaged at first in the school was not more than six or eight, and the number of children was not more than twenty-five or thirty, but it was in this wise that originated this first Sabbath School, whose Anniversary we observe to-day.

It seems highly fitting that, now and here, I should call over the names of those noble ladies who were pioneers in this enterprise, for their names are worthy a public record and to be held in lasting remembrance as the

FOUNDERS OF THIS SABBATH SCHOOL.

These worthy names, as I have learned them from the lips of the living, were as follows: —

Miss Sarah Richardson. — She was a sister of our venerable friend and Christian brother, Joseph L. Richardson, Esq., now in his ninetieth year. This young lady subsequently became the wife of Rev. Alvan Bond, D.D., of Norwich, Conn., a clergyman of eminence, and still living. Mrs. Bond has been dead some years.

Miss Catharine Richardson. — This young lady became the wife of Rev. Tilly Brown, a Baptist minister, who removed West and settled in Indiana. Mrs. Brown is not living.

Miss Eliza Wheeler. — The sister of our Christian brother, Abijah R. Wheeler. She became the wife of the late Rev. Sewall Harding, who was a native of Medway, and for fourteen years the honored Pastor of this Church. Mrs. Harding is living, still young and sprightly, and her presence with us to-day is a great joy.

Miss Mercy Daniels Wheeler. — A sister of the last. She became the wife of Rev. Jasper Adams, D. D., a native of this Parish, and directly descended from Peter Adams, at whose house the first Public Worship in the Town was conducted by Rev. David Deming, one hundred and sixty-two years ago to-day. This Rev. Dr. Jasper Adams, whom Miss Mercy D. Wheeler married, was a man of eminent learning and pulpit ability, a distinguished minister, and for some years the honored President of Charleston College, South Carolina. Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Adams are both dead.

Mrs. Mehitabel P. Daniels. — She was the young wife of the late lamented Jasper Daniels, Esq., of Rockville. Mrs. Daniels is still living, and we hoped to have welcomed her presence here to-day.

Mrs. Miriam Partridge. — This was a sister of the last named, and the wife of David Partridge, Esq.

Miss Abigail M. Harding. — She became the wife of Moses Daniels, Esq., and afterward of Mr. John Richardson. She was the mother of Mrs. Abner Johnson, recently removed from us.

Mrs. Abigail R. Thayer. — This was a daughter of Dr. Abijah Richardson, who for so many years was the Physician of the Parish. Mrs. Thayer afterward became the wife of Mr. Zachariah Lovell, who recently died at the advanced age of ninety-one years. Mrs. Lovell died some years since.

These were the ladies whose names should be cherished and remembered as the Founders of our Sabbath School.

At first the school met at nine o'clock in the morning.

The children were from seven to fourteen years of age, divided into classes of six each.

The general direction of the school was committed to Miss Catharine Richardson.

The school session was opened by the reading of a Prayer, and sometimes singing by the Teachers. "The children did not sing in meeting in those days," I am told.

For exercises, the children committed the Scriptures to recite, and also Watts' Hymns. The Shorter Catechism was somewhat in use.

Some of the discouragements under which the enterprise started, were the prejudices they encountered. Their minister non-committal, the great Dr. Emmons expressing doubt as to the wisdom of the movement, not a single man of the Church to come to their help, and all the outside people quite down upon the undertaking. In such straits, one of them, Miss Wheeler, went to see Madam Prentiss, of Medfield, for consultation as to

giving it up. She met there an earnest Christian lady from Boston, who said to her, "My dear child, you have put your hand to the plough, and you must not turn back!" She returned home greatly comforted and strengthened. And they were all soon cheered and delighted when their young minister took a decided position in their favor, by preaching a very stirring sermon on these words, —

"Help these women." — Phil. 4: 3.

The hearts of the men were touched. The sympathies of the good Dea. Blake were won, the venerable Dea. Asa Daniels took the matter into serious consideration; and one man, Mr. Moses Harding, a brother of one of the ladies, came, the next Lord's day, into the school. It was not very long before a certain young man made his appearance among these Gospel workers; although not at that time a member of the Church, yet an earnest Christian, he took hold with a hearty purpose to do what he could, that purpose I am happy to believe has not yet left him. He was the first one to open the school by extempore prayer. Hitherto, the ladies had used a written prayer, prepared for the purpose by Rev. Mr. Bailey.

This young man continued to labor in the school. Shortly, others came in, and the effort prospered. He was chosen its First Superintendent; and for twenty-eight years he filled that office with great acceptance until his removal from the town. I need not say that I refer to this gentleman at my left, Dea. Timothy Walker, of Holliston, whom we are so happy to have with us on this occasion.

The school was, for some years, discontinued in the winter, and was removed several times from one place to another. First held, as I have said, in that large, upper room of an unfinished house; then removed to the Office of Timothy Hammond, Esq., which stood in the yard of the present residence of Mr. E. S. Fuller; next into the house now occupied by Mr. Fuller; and when the Parish Hall was built, in 1822, it was removed to that, and afterwards to the meeting-house. Since this house was built in 1850, the Sabbath School has assembled in the Vestry below. Mr. Timothy Walker was chosen Superintendent in 1822, and remained in office until his resignation, March 4, 1850. On the day of his resignation the ladies of the school, in recognition of his long and able service, presented him with a large Family Bible, which was inscribed as follows: —

"This Copy of the Sacred Scriptures presented to Dea. Timothy Walker by the female members of the Sabbath School of the First Parish in Medway, a token of respect for his faithful services and untiring zeal as their Superintendent for the long period of twenty-eight years.

EAST MEDWAY, Mar. 4th 1850."

To fill the vacancy thus made, Mr. Matthew Brown was chosen Super-

intendent, and was re-elected for six successive years, until his removal to Franklin, in 1857.

His successor was the beloved and lamented John S. Walker, who served the school very efficiently fourteen years, until 1870, about a year prior to his death.

Since 1870 Dea. William Daniels has been chosen to serve in the position, for which he is admirably fitted.

For some twenty years this school has had a branch located in Rockville, consisting of some fifty members.

This Branch School was started by a lady who came to this Parish, by marriage, from the Mt. Vernon Church, Boston, of which Dr. Kirk was then Pastor. She, not having good health, was able to attend meeting but a part of the day, and she knew there were many of the children of her neighborhood who, by reason of distance, could not attend public worship and Sabbath School at all; the thought came to her of inviting them to come to her house Sabbath afternoons, and she would tell them Bible stories. This the children were glad to do; so, for continuous Sabbath afternoons, they came, until she had not only her sitting-room but several other rooms quite filled with eager little boys and girls. At length she called in some one to assist her; and shortly, with the help of her good husband and others interested, a Branch Sabbath School was fully established. A hall was fitted up for their use, and the enterprise is still in successful operation, although some of its early laborers are now sainted in Heaven; one, recently a Teacher, has gone to receive her Crown. I refer to Miss Nellie Clark.

At present the two schools together number over two hundred members, and are enjoying a good degree of prosperity.

By this review it appears that our Sabbath School is an old institution; that those who were young, the boys and girls who were in it at its start, if living, are now getting on in years.

The ladies who conceived the idea and formed the School, all of them, were noble women, and four of the eight became the wives of clergymen. Only two of these eight remain on earth; the others have finished their work and entered into rest, the surviving ones must be on the borderland. May God bless them still for their labor of love!

Of the four Superintendents, all are living but one, and he, good man! died early, too early; for he could ill be spared by his family, by the Church, by the Sabbath School, and by the community.

The Teachers and Scholars of the school in these sixty years, — how many is their number? What have they done in the world, and where are they to-day? Many in Heaven, some scattered widely, others here. Our number keeps about the same. "One generation passeth and another generation cometh." How many have been connected with this school in all these years it is impossible even to give an approximate estimate. Who can calculate the good which this enterprise, so small

and so unpopular in its beginning, has done in this community and in the world? Who can calculate the work it is to-day doing and which lies in its hands for the coming years?

See this ceaseless current of immortal souls flowing yearly through the Sabbath School to be filtered and blessed by religious instruction and influence. What an enterprise is this in which to labor! How much better those few ladies builded than they knew!

We see some advancement in Christian ideas in sixty years. We should hardly wish to go back to those days again. The activity of the Church as a whole, the advance in Christian sentiment, are quite amazing.

But I proposed to confine myself to a very brief sketch of our Sabbath School, thus to open the way for others to speak whom we are all eager to hear. This, however, I will say: Let us honor the names and memories of those Christian ladies who founded this Sabbath School. Let us be proud of its history, and let us give to it our encouragement and our service, so that its future may be even more illustrious than its past.

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